

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PARK AND PLANNING**

**SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
April to September 2005**

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SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

April to September 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Semi-Annual Report, formerly the Biannual Report, describes the activities of the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning for the period April to September 2005. Its format, along with its name, has been revised to feature specific work programs and focus on current issues that impact the residents of Montgomery County.

During this reporting period, the Department has met with unprecedented challenges. With the highest level of professionalism, staff continues its focus to address and resolve issues related to the development of Clarksburg. Refining internal administrative processes and creating a more efficient level of checks and balances have been the Department's highest priority issues. Corrective actions continue to be instituted to increase the transparency of the agency's work, tighten controls in the development review process and, ultimately, restore the credibility of the agency. An overview of issues related to Clarksburg begins on page 1.

Also of significance during this period, several senior level staff members announced their retirement after serving distinguished careers here at the Commission.

Don Cochran, Deputy Director, retired in August after serving more than 20 years with the Commission. During his long tenure as Director of our Parks Department until 2003, Don oversaw significant growth of the parks system, both in quantity of parks and quality of services. Bill Mooney, formerly Chief of the Enterprise Division, has been appointed to serve as Acting Deputy Director.

Superintendent of our Parks Division, Les Straw, also retired in August. Les worked in the parks system for 25 years and assumed the position of Superintendent in 2003. Gordon Rosenthal, Chief of the Northern Region Parks Division, will serve as Acting Superintendent of Parks while the agency conducts a nationwide search for a permanent replacement.

Charlie Loehr, Director of Park and Planning, has announced that he will retire at the end of October. As you know, Charlie has served the Commission well in various capacities since 1980, culminating in his seven-year tenure as Director. The Department is gearing up to begin an extensive search for a new leader, and the community will be invited to become involved in that process.

During this reporting period, the Department and its staff were recognized for their work, as follows:

- **Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence** – At a ceremony on September 8, planning efforts in downtown Silver Spring were recognized and awarded for excellence in urban

planning. Attending the ceremony were representatives of the Planning Board, County Executive, the County Council, and Foulger Pratt Development.

- **Smart Growth Alliance Award** – The Smart Growth Alliance recognized White Flint Crossing, a future mixed-use development, located along Rockville Pike near the White Flint Metro Station.
- **Creative Maintenance Award** – Maintenance staff was awarded the Creative Maintenance Award by the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) at the August conference in Ocean City. Staff was recognized for their work in repairing the bridge at Becca Lilly Park.
- **Montgomery County Fair Blue Ribbon Award** – In August, the Department was awarded the first place Blue Ribbon for its booth at the Montgomery County Fair. The theme of this year’s project, “Country Themes and Children’s Dreams” celebrated the 25th anniversary of the protection of the Agriculture Reserve and the “Wings of Fancy” butterfly show. Also displayed was the very popular exhibit on diversity and the changing demographics in the county.

This Semi-Annual Report features the following highlighted work programs:

- As the adoption of the Master Plan for the **Agricultural Reserve** celebrates its 25th anniversary, there is no better time to reaffirm support for protection of the Agricultural Reserve as a vital component in creating great quality-of-life in Montgomery County. Issues that pose challenges and those that present opportunities must be addressed at this critical time. This section of the Semi-Annual Report identifies those issues and recommends solutions.

A detailed outline of issues concerning the Agricultural Reserve, including a list of TDR program issues, begins on page 3.

- ***A Planning Framework Report: Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and Creating Great Public Spaces*** offers a new planning perspective for development potential through a focused pattern of sustainable growth. The proposal chronicles key development trends to more specifically address the changing pattern of development and needs of Montgomery County residents. Developed with active community participation, the work program’s goal is to design communities with vibrant mixed-use centers, shared-use boulevards, and great public spaces. Included with that goal is the Department’s continuing commitment to uphold the General Plan, increase affordable housing, preserve the integrity of the Agricultural Reserve, and provide adequate public infrastructure.

Please see page 15 for an overview of this exciting new proposal and refer to the *A Planning Framework Report* (Attachment 1-1) for additional information about this program.

- The new **SmartParks** software system is now fully implemented and operational within the parks division. This system was custom-designed for the Department using GIS and

Database technologies that ensure consistent data tracking, accurate accounting of park costs, effective utilization of resources, and efficient work processes. A reliable

inventory of parklands and facilities is accessible to parks staff to centralize park inventories.

More specific information about SmartParks begins on page 19.

Other work programs featured in this Report include:

- **Enterprise Fund/Public Private Partnerships** – Summarizes recent activities, including new opportunities for potential partnerships (page 21) and the launching of a major marketing effort by the Division (Attachment 3-1).
- **Proposed Master Plan Program** – Lists a proposed, newly revised schedule of master plan projects. This schedule was developed in accordance with Planning Board and County Council guidance (page 23).
- **Housing Initiatives** – Updates and summarizes the status of various housing studies, surveys and projects. Includes an updated *Housing Snapshot* for the period January to June, 2005 reflecting recent housing activity in the county (page 28).
- **Volunteer Activities** – Highlights activities of volunteers throughout the various divisions within the Department. Of special note, Ms. Linda Williams, a Brookside Gardens volunteer, was awarded the Governor’s Volunteer Service Award for her dedicated contributions to the Department (page 31).
- **Development Review Division Activity Report** – Provides statistical information on Subdivision, Site Plan, Inspections and Enforcement, Project Plans, Zoning, Board of Appeals and Public Information Service activities (page 33).
- **Central Maintenance Project Report** – Lists the status of Central Maintenance Division project (page 35).
- **Park Development Division Project Report** – Includes information on the Park Acquisition Program and a list of active park development projects (page 36).
- **General Update on Department Activities** – General updates are provided on a variety of programs and projects, including the Department’s Diversity Action Initiative, Infrastructure Maintenance, and the newly implemented ParkPASS system (page 39).

As detailed in this Semi-Annual Report, the work of the Department of Park and Planning continues to be advanced. The agency remains committed to its mission, “To improve the quality of life by conserving and enhancing the natural and developed environment for current and future generations.”

OVERVIEW OF CLARKSBURG

Montgomery County residents care a great deal about how their neighborhoods, cities and towns are designed, how growth is managed, and how parkland is preserved. Recently, our agency's ability to adequately inspect and enforce site plans has been called into question because developers built numerous buildings too tall and too close to the streets in Clarksburg Town Center.

Due to reasons that are still under investigation, the two agencies primarily responsible for monitoring development in the county – the Department of Park and Planning and the Department of Permitting Services – did not catch the discrepancies early enough in the process.

Based on our reviews to date, the developer and the builders bear responsibility for violating the plans approved by the Planning Board. In the coming weeks and months, our agency will hold additional public hearings on matters in Clarksburg and determine what the developers must do to fix the problems.

However, the Department of Park and Planning has its own internal systems to fix—and we are committed to doing so.

Currently, the Council's Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) is conducting an independent, thorough and detailed investigation of our systems and how the problems in Clarksburg developed. OLO will issue a final report in early November that will include an assessment of the problem and recommendations for improving our agency. The Department welcomes the report and believes our agency will learn a great deal from the findings. However, we are working internally to identify issues, problems and solutions even as OLO conducts the investigation. This parallel look at process will yield a more comprehensive list of potential changes that will restore the process and the confidence of the community.

The Planning Board has instituted administrative changes designed to increase the transparency; tighten controls over site plans; limit last minute changes requested by developers; and instill a greater level of checks and balances.

- After a brief temporary building permit freeze – together with the Department of Permitting Services – we revised the building permit application to require applicants to calculate the precise height and setback requirements in feet. In addition, a Maryland-certified engineer or planner must now sign off on all site plans and guarantee – on behalf of the developers and builders – that everything on the ground will be built explicitly to the standards set forth in the plan approved by the Planning Board.
- The practice that gave individual planners latitude in using the minor site plan amendment process to make changes to Planning Board approved plans has been suspended. Only the director of the agency is now authorized to do so and the public will be notified and given an opportunity to comment prior to any decisions being made.

- Developers are no longer permitted to make last-minute changes to development applications. Beginning in November, all documents and plans that come before the Planning Board for consideration will be locked 14 days prior to the scheduled hearing on the issue. We have established a goal that staff reports will also be available on our website 11 days before public hearings.
- Staff resources are being reallocated to identify and address our internal processes and find better solutions. We have appointed a new acting deputy director who will lead the effort in reforming our development review division.
- Our development review division staff is developing comprehensive checklists for processing all of our actions and instituting a peer review system to ensure the integrity of data presented to the Planning Board – and the community – for consideration.
- Our research and technology division is working to get all development-related documents on our website to ensure a streamlined and consistent record-keeping system on our part while also allowing the community greater access to review proposed plans from any computer connected to the Internet.

In addition to the above, the Planning Board has issued a request for Proposals to complete a comprehensive review and reengineering of the Development Review Division and the associated processes. The review will address the following areas:

- **Regulatory Compliance Audits** – Audit the technical compliance of selected/ representative “as-built” development projects with the specific terms and conditions expressed in applicable regulatory approvals.
- **Comparative Regulatory Analyses** – Compare the existing development process with examples of “best practices” deployed by other jurisdictions in the nation.
- **Operations Engineering** – Apply proven empirical models to describe and analyze the Commission/County’s existing development process, and support the Consultant’s recommendations for prospective performance improvements.
- **Administrative Design** – Prescribe reliable internal (administrative) controls appropriate to assure the quality of, and compliance with, future development (regulatory) approvals.
- **Personnel Analyses** – Analyze and prescribe minimum educational and experience qualifications for each job classification associated with the development approval process.

AGRICULTURAL RESERVE

At this critical 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Master Plan, it is vital for the county to reaffirm its support for preserving farming and farmland. County and state programs supporting the Agricultural Reserve have evolved continually since its inception. These programs face increasing challenges in these early years of the 21st Century. Supporting regulations, educational efforts, and agricultural support programs must continue to evolve to meet the reality of appropriate and profitable farming on the urban edge in 2005 – a quite different reality from the commodity farms that dominated in 1980 when the Master Plan was adopted.

The Department is committed to the preservation of Montgomery County’s agricultural heritage. The Rural Area Planning Team has followed up on the March 10 announcement of Chairman Berlage, County Executive Duncan, and County Councilmember Mike Knapp of initiatives to further strengthen agriculture and preserve open space in the county. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the visionary “*Master Plan for Preservation of Agriculture and Open Space*” the Department is spearheading a variety of initiatives to reflect 21st Century land use issues and agricultural economics. The staff will be presenting recommendations on these initiatives to the Planning Board in the late fall. These will include actions to address:

- Increasing residential development activity in the Rural Density Transfer Zone,
- Impact of incursions of large institutional uses in the RDT Zone,
- The economic sustainability and profitability of agriculture,
- Sustaining the improved tracking system for Transfer of Development Rights
- Expanding agricultural education – awareness and training opportunities

These proposed initiatives, are too significant to languish. The Agricultural Reserve and the great experiment of the TDR program are too important and under too many increasing threats to ignore modifications that will allow them to gracefully evolve into the 21st Century. As Montgomery County matures and the region grows, the Agricultural Reserve will become increasingly important to the county’s overall quality of life by:

- Increasing the potential for regional “food security” in a time of great change in transportation, by providing agricultural products and food supply close to metropolitan markets;
- Protecting the environment— serving as a “clean air shed” to help cleanse the atmosphere, and providing a mechanism to help protect the quality and quantity of water resources by minimizing the amount of paved surface; and
- Providing open spaces for recreational opportunities for children and adults in close proximity to built areas, while keeping the land protected from traffic generating uses that cover the land with buildings and paved surfaces.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AGRICULTURE AND AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

Building Pressure on the Agricultural Reserve

The Planning Board believes the following land use issues impacting the Agricultural Reserve, particularly the RDT Zone, are the most important and must be addressed:

- Rate of Residential Development Activity
- Proliferation of Non-Agricultural Uses
- Stresses on the TDR Program
- Agricultural Economic Development Concerns
- Agricultural Awareness and Education

Specifically, these issues relate to the following concerns:

- **Rate of Residential Development Activity** - Methods are needed to resist demand for housing on agricultural land including incentives to transfer “developable” TDRs from the RDT Zone, thus reducing residential potential.

Also, a lack of regulatory guidance for design of permitted residential development in the RDT Zone leads to elimination of the large contiguous farm fields necessary for most agriculture. Design guidelines reflecting the intent of the Master Plan can better protect rural character and agricultural potential.

New technologies authorized by the county for sewage treatment opens more land for housing than was envisioned in the Master Plan for the Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space. The use of new technologies (other than to protect public health) should be tied to reduced density and design standards.

- **Proliferation of Non-Agricultural Uses** - Requests for sewer extensions for large institutional uses in the RDT Zone are increasing. Cumulatively, these uses nibble away at the intent of the Master Plan and impede impervious goals for Chesapeake Bay protection. They bring high levels of activity and traffic and remove large tracts of land from the potential for agricultural production. There is a need to evaluate what size and mix of uses are appropriate for the agricultural and rural intent of the RDT Zone and the Master Plan.
- **Stresses on the TDR Program** – There is a need for additional TDR receiving sites as few viable TDR receiving areas remain after Clarksburg, and concepts to reduce development potential in the RDT Zone will create new sending TDRs.
- **Agricultural Economic Development** - Declining traditional agricultural production leaves farmlands vulnerable to development pressure and the intent of the Master Plan open to question. Support is vital for the evolution of farming to models that will be profitable as the Agricultural Reserve becomes an island of agricultural land surrounded

by developing areas in surrounding counties. Because of this fiscal stress, support is needed to enable this sustained evolution of agricultural production and agricultural uses. Land use regulations must more easily accommodate evolving agriculture and agriculturally related uses.

- **Agricultural Awareness and Education** – Protection and preservation of the Agricultural Reserve depends on strong support for its value from all county residents and property owners. Too many down-county residents are not aware of the importance of the Agricultural Reserve. Immediate and long-term action is needed to spread this awareness and allow all county residents to share in the benefits of this important resource.

M-NCPPC WORKPROGRAM LAND USE ISSUES IN THE AGRICULTURAL RESERVE

The M-NCPPC staff will work with other appropriate county agencies and stakeholder groups to implement the action plan outlined below. The elements for implementation include the action items, the public outreach program, and the elements for further evaluation.

The guiding element in setting these priorities for action is protecting the dual intent of the Master Plan for the Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space to:

- Ensure sufficient areas of large tracts of contiguous farmland that will support a wide variety of agricultural opportunities. This will entail actions to support the TDR Program, to limit residential development potential that impedes the potential for farming, and to limit non-agriculturally related uses that are not rural in character or activity levels.
- Support the business of agriculture, giving it the flexibility to change to meet an evolving marketplace over time.

ACTION ITEMS

Recommendations on the following elements will be presented to the Council before the end of the year. M-NCPPC staff will be meeting with the various major stakeholder groups to obtain public reaction to these proposals. They will return to the Planning Board with final recommendations that will include an evaluation of community reaction.

The following actions are recommended in descending order of priority for action although the M-NCPPC will be acting simultaneously on most of these actions. The final category, supporting the continuing evolution of agriculture in the county, will take longer to evaluate and actions cannot be determined before data collection and evaluation is complete.

Issue One: Limit Residential Development Activity in the Agricultural Reserve.

- Item: Reduce Development Potential in RDT Zone.

Background: Reducing residential development potential in the RDT Zone can be achieved by incentives or downzoning. Further downzoning is a very difficult option. It will probably be easier to find new TDR receiving sites than to further reduce density in the RDT Zone, so creating incentives to remove further density is a preferred option.

Action Options: Reduce density potential in the RDT Zone below one dwelling per twenty-five acres or adopt a zoning text amendment to create a “Super TDR” for the “Buildable” TDRs that will provide an incentive to reduce development potential in the RDT Zone by allowing these TDRs to be valued at their actual potential as building lots in the RDT Zone. (Recommended by TDR Task Force.)

Status: Possible ZTA to create the “super TDR” written, seeking additional public comment from stakeholders on alternate options – action on ZTA will require establishing additional TDR Receiving Sites.

- **Item: Abuse of the “Child Lot” provision in RDT Zone.**

Background - This option is only available to the children of property owners in the RDT in 1980. Research can find out how many more of those properties remain. It has been interpreted that this benefit is only open for one property owned, not multiple properties. There seem to have been some abuses, but the number of subdivisions that can be categorized as abuses have not yet been quantified.

Action Options: Modify or eliminate the provision. The intent for the provision was to enable farming families to remain together on the farm. Farming families have had 25 years to take advantage of this provision, and there is an increasing perception that the provision is now being used more often for creating higher density developable lots for the children of any RDT property owner than preserving family farms. Options for addressing this issues include:

- Remove the potential for this higher density option from the Zoning Ordinance. There are increasing instances of the provision being used to create subdivisions, not support a farm family living on the land, or
- Modify the provision so that any transfer of land to a child must guarantee that a home is built and lived in by the recipient for a designated period of time, and that the recipient is employed in the family farm business, or
- Modify the provision so that only children employed in the family farm business are allowed to receive a lot at the higher density, or
- Consider other options proposed by stakeholders during public outreach.

Status: Seeking public comment from stakeholders on options to either eliminate the provision or modify it to reflect the actual intent of the provision. Research underway to

establish the number of remaining properties that are under unchanged ownership since 1980, and the number of subdivisions that can be defined as actual violations of the intent of this provision.

- **Item: Use of “sand mound” septic treatment systems for residential development, authorized since 1980, and whether their general use is in conflict with the intent of the Master Plan.**

Background: Some constituencies believe that the use of “sand mound” septic systems is no longer considered “alternative” by county permitting agencies or the state and therefore should be a “normal” alternative for subdivisions in the RDT Zone. Others believe that the Master Plan for the Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space depended on septic limitations to restrict residential potential in the RDT Zone, and that systems considered “alternative” in 1980, should always be barred for standard subdivision use in the RDT Zone as a density restriction measure. Some believe the use of the systems in “regular” subdivision should only be allowed as an incentive measure to reduce density and encourage lot patterns that preserve contiguous farm fields (a primary directive of the Master Plan).

Action Options: Do not consider septic treatment in approval of subdivisions (as that is the purview of a technical permitting agency, or ban the use of “sand mound” systems in RDT subdivisions, or limit the use of “sand mound” or other “alternative” systems to properties that reduce density below 1/25, and follow design guidelines that preserve open farmland - except for replacement systems to meet public health standards. Adopt executive regulation or Water Sewer Plan changes as determined appropriate.

Status: Seeking public comment from stakeholders on the various options.

- **Item: Public road requirements in rural subdivisions are detrimental to rural character.**

Background: Public road construction standards are suburban or urban in character and are not visually appropriate in very rural areas. The DWPT does not support creating alternate construction standards for public residential roads in rural areas. Allowing more dwellings to access private drives in rural areas will allow access drives that are in character with the surrounding area.

Recommended Action: Revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to allow additional lots on private drives in RDT Zone. (Recommended by Rural Subdivision Study Group)

Status: ZTA written, seeking additional public comments from stakeholders.

- **Item: Design of residential development authorized by right in the RDT Zone.**

Background: Because the preservation of large contiguous farmfields has long been identified as an important factor in the preservation of rural character and preventing the

“impermanence syndrome” in the agricultural community; it has become increasingly important to consider what factors should be considered in the design of residential subdivisions in the RDT Zone.

Building lots too tightly clustered may preserve open land, but they can create an appearance of suburban character along roadways; but homes placed in the middle of large open fields can create a low-density residential “estate” character along roadways. Neither contributes to the preservation of rural/agricultural character. Guidelines for residential development design are needed that work “with” the landscape and consider placement of homesites so that landscapes and vistas and farmfields are preserved as the primary goal. Determining lotlines and lot sizes become a secondary and lesser action. (This methodology was recommended in the Rural Subdivision Study Group, and supported by the TDR Task Force.)

Recommended Action: The Planning Board will adopt agricultural preservation design standards for residential development in the RDT Zone.

Status: Draft standards have been reviewed by the Planning Board, public comments from stakeholders are being considered.

Issue Two: Appropriate Type and Size Non-Agricultural Uses in the RDT Zone

- **Item: Impact of large institutional uses in the RDT Zone.**

Background: In recent years there have been increasing requests for sewer category changes (for sewer or large capacity septic systems) that will allow the placement of very large and active institutional uses in the RDT Zone – primarily at or near the edges of the Agricultural Reserve. Many believe that approving very large such facilities is contrary to the intent of the use of the RDT Zone due to traffic generation, daily activity levels, and removal of land from potential for agricultural production. And if given sewer access, they significantly increase imperviousness due to parking lot requirements.

Action Options: The PIF Working Group has recommended prohibiting any sewer extensions into the RDT Zone for the reasons noted above. A further option would deny use of septic systems larger than permitted for a single-family dwelling for uses that inherently do not meet the intent of the Master Plan. Changes to the Water and Sewer Plan would implement these recommendations.

Status: Seeking public comments from stakeholders on PIF Working Group recommendations and additional options.

- **Item: Appropriate non-agricultural uses in rural areas.**

Background: *Campgrounds* (defined as land upon which 2 or more *campsites* are located and occupied by *camping units* for children or adults) are not permitted in the RDT Zone. A *campsite* is defined as a plot of ground in a *campground* intended for the exclusive occupation by *camping unit* under the control of a camper. And a *camping unit*

is defined as a tent or camping vehicle temporarily located on a *campsite*. And a *camper* is defined as a person who registers his party for the occupancy of a *campsite* or is placed in charge of a campsite.

This rather circular logic has come to be interpreted to mean that no camps or camping (other than those on public property, pre-existing the zone, or operated by religious organizations) are permitted in the RDT Zone. Some constituencies believe that this is not a logical interpretation of the definitions, some believe that banning camps and camping preserves agriculture, and some believe that even if the interpretation is correct that it is very counterproductive to ban rural oriented uses like camping experiences (especially for children) from the RDT Zone.

Action Options: If camping experiences in a rural setting are considered an appropriate activity in the Agricultural Reserve, a ZTA for “outdoor education” or “non-residential camping” type uses can allow low intensity, low imperviousness, rural appropriate uses if they do not generate significant traffic and provide a wholesome environment for children, youth, and some adult activities. Rural appropriate, low intensity uses do not prevent agricultural use of the land in the future, and can foster an appreciation of nature and agricultural landscapes.

Status: ZTA written, seeking public comments from stakeholders on the philosophy of allowing this type of use in the zone.

- **Item: Should use of a “development right” be required for uses other than dwellings in RDT Zone? There are other non-agriculturally related uses that reduce potential agricultural production but are not required to “use” a development right. Does this meet the intent of the Master Plan?**

Background: If the intent of establishing transfer of development rights was to prevent a proliferation of non-agriculturally related uses in the RDT Zone, then it was a mistake to only require “use” of a development right in the zone by a residential use. A property could sell all its TDRs and still become a building site for a number of uses allowed by right or special exception in the zone. Some believe this was an oversight that should be corrected, or that a proliferating threat from non-agricultural uses other than homes was not foreseen in 1980.

Recommended Actions: Discuss concept with Zoning Screening Committee at County Council. Determine if this would require a Master Plan Amendment.

Status: Discussion of concept and legal mechanism for action before making a recommendation. Obtain comment from stakeholders regarding the extent of this as a problem in the Zone.

- **Item: Increase support for equestrian activity in the Agricultural Reserve.**

Background: Existing riding easements need to be indicated when subdivisions are created. It will make this job a lot easier if the location of these easements is known in advance.

Recommended Action: The county should research and map public use easements that provide equestrian access in the Agricultural Reserve.

Status: The M-NCPPC will direct appropriate staff to map equestrian trail easements.

Issue Three: TDR Program Support

- **Item: The TDR 2/3- use requirement may inhibit use of TDRs in certain circumstances.**

Background: This concept, recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, is intended to allow greater use of TDR receiving site potential in situations where the 2/3 use requirement actually inhibits their use because of the need to get special permission from the Planning Board.

Recommended Action: ZTA to eliminate or reduce use requirement.

Status: ZTA written, seeking additional public comment from stakeholders.

- **Item: TDR use may conflict with afforestation requirements.**

Background: This concept, recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, related to the conflicts occasionally seen with environmental requirements on TDR receiving sites. The change would allow greater use of TDR density potential while still protecting important environmental resources.

Recommended Action: ZTA to establish easier use of off-site afforestation for TDR receiving sites.

Status: ZTA written, seeking additional public comment from stakeholders.

- **Item: Establishing new means to create TDR receiving capacity.**

Background: This concept, recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, would encourage the use of TDRs in mixed-use development as a means to increase the quantity and quality of TDR receiving sites.

Recommended Action: Establish transfer ratios for creating TDR receiving sites for mixed-use and commercial zones.

Status: Concept being evaluated, seeking public comment from stakeholders.

- **Item: Reduce development pressure in the “outer” and more rural areas of the RDT Zone by allowing “internal” transfer of TDRs to “edge areas” (near developed areas or rural villages) or areas on or adjoining major highways or transit routes (near MARC train stations in the RDT Zone).**

Background: This concept, recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, would provide more receiving capacity for TDRs and provide more housing opportunities near major transit and transportation infrastructure.

Recommended Action: Evaluate concept to allow internal transfer of TDRs in RDT Zone. A similar concept was discussed in the Damascus Master Plan evaluation.

Status: Concept under evaluation, seeking public comment from stakeholders on concept and appropriate locations. Review input with Zoning Screening Committee.

- **Item: Does an increasingly limited supply of TDRs generate the need for means to establish more TDRs?**

Background: Some constituencies (developers of TDR receiving sites and RDT Zone property owners who have sold all their TDRs) believe that the very high TDR prices are the result of a decline in the number of TDRs available to sell. If that is perceived to be a problem, allowing the sale TDRs created from “bundled” increments of “leftover” acres in the RDT Zone would create a new market segment. These acreages are created because a TDR is only authorized for each full five acres. So one acre would be 1/5 of a TDR, and a developer could buy these fragments and combine them to create full TDRs.

Recommended Action: Evaluate the concept of allowing “percentage” transfer of TDRs for “leftover” acres in RDT below five full acres. May need careful study by legal staff.

Status: Concept under evaluation, seeking public comment from stakeholders.

- **Item: TDR receiving sites only set through Master Plans, but floating zones that increase density can be proposed outside the Master Plan process.**

Background: This concept, strongly recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, would encourage the use of TDRs to create any additional density created in a rezoning involving a floating zone. These zones can be proposed outside the Master Plan process, and therefore can request additional density without consideration of TDR potential. The rezoning case for the Good Counsel High School site in Wheaton is a good example of this situation.

Recommended Action: Allow additional density in any floating zone rezoning only if TDRs are used to achieve density. Adopt policy guidelines for using TDRs for additional density in floating zones. (Recommended by TDR Task Force.)

Status: Concept under evaluation, seeking additional public comment from stakeholders.

- **Item: Updated TDR Tracking System Ongoing Maintenance.**

Background: The Research and Technology Division has just completed the first TDR Status Report since 1997 in cooperation with the Department of Economic Development. The findings were presented to the County Council's PHED Committee in September as part of work on the Shady Grove Sector Plan. This report brought the TDR tracking methods into the computer system. This work must be maintained for the future.

Recommended Action: Designate the M-NCPPC Research and Technology Division to maintain the system in consultation with the M-NCPPC Development Review Division and the Community Based Planning Rural Area Team, the Agricultural Services Division of the Department of Economic Development, and the office of the County Attorney. Staff and financial resources should be provided to maintain these records for the future. This tracking system will monitor TDRs created and removed from the RDT Zone, and those designated for use in RDT Zone residential development.

Status: Awaiting approval for recommendation.

- **Item: TDR receiving sites can be located within municipalities in the county.**

Background: In other states, inter-jurisdictional transfer of development rights is allowed and encouraged. In Washington State it was determined that the residents of Seattle benefit from the land preservation resulting from the surrounding King County TDR program, so Seattle (and other municipalities) now have some TDR receiving site reflecting their benefits from the preservation of agricultural and rural open space in the surrounding county.

Recommended Action: This concept, recommended by the TDR Task Force and endorsed by the Planning Board, endorsed establishing an inter-jurisdictional committee for discussions with Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Takoma Park, and perhaps the District of Columbia.

Status: Awaiting approval to establish committee.

Issue Four - Economic Development For Agriculture

- **Item: Assuring the continued viability and profitability of agriculture in Montgomery County. Concepts are needed to support the evolution of agriculture**

to meet the 21st Century challenges and opportunities in a largely urban and suburban region.

Background: Land preservation in the Agricultural Reserve is an empty promise unless agricultural production is economically viable – unless it is profitable. The decline in “traditional” agriculture in the county must be offset by a continuing evolution to agricultural models viable on the urban “fringe” or as a rural “island” surrounded by urban and suburban development.

Recommended Action: M-NCPPC staff is completing a research report to help identify issues and opportunities for the continued viability of agriculture in the county. The report will consist of interviews with county farmers, other local experts, as well as experts from around the country, and further recommendations for action.

Status: Research for report currently in progress. Focus group of interested stakeholders may be formed to discuss methodologies for the future depending on report recommendations.

- **Item: What role should the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve play in the emerging issue of regional food security?**

Background - In an age of rising fuel costs and global instability, food security is becoming an important issue for the greater Washington region. Further evaluation of how the Agricultural Reserve can contribute more to the regional food supply chain in a sustainable and responsible way is needed.

Recommended Action – Authorize study of long-term food security issues in the region, and the role of the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve.

Status - Concept under evaluation, seeking public comment from stakeholders.

Issue Five – Agricultural Preservation Awareness and Education

- **Item: The county’s Agricultural Farm Park is currently underutilized. A plan for expanded use of its facilities and potential is needed.**

Background – This facility has enormous potential and should be to farming as Brookside Gardens is to expanding knowledge of and appreciation for excellence in horticulture.

Recommended Action – The M-NCPPC Park Planning staff will work with other appropriate M-NCPPC and county agency staff, and interested stakeholders to develop an expanded plan for the use of the Agricultural Farm Park.

Status – Staff has begun work on a draft amendment to the Master Plan for the Agricultural Farm Park for further discussion and public consideration.

- **Item: Create a specific brochure and website location for information about the Agricultural Reserve and its resources for the community.**

Background – There is no single source of information about the public resources in the Agricultural Reserve. More publicity elements are needed.

Recommended Action – The M-NCPPC and the Agricultural Services Division of the Department of Economic Development should work together to develop an “Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve Attractions” brochure and website for use by the general public.

They should provide geographic and background information on the Rustic Road Routes, trail systems (human and equestrian), bicycle routes, parks and recreation facilities, public access “pick your own” or similar farms, historic sites and communities, and important natural resources.

Status - Concept under evaluation, determining appropriate agency involvement and funding, seeking public comment from stakeholders.

PUBLIC OUTREACH STRATEGY

Most of the action items outlined above recommend obtaining public comment from interested stakeholders before proceeding. Some recommend further evaluation before establishing specific recommendations. In either case a public outreach strategy is required.

REVITALIZING CENTERS, RESHAPING BOULEVARDS, AND CREATING GREAT PUBLIC SPACES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Department proposes to refocus its planning agenda in response to the changing pattern of development and needs of our residents. A planning agenda developed with active community participation, focusing on creating vibrant community-scaled centers, shared-use boulevards, and quality public spaces can guide our vision for creating a livable, beautiful, affordable, and prosperous community for all our citizens.

The Department's proposed strategy will capture the county's future potential through a more focused pattern of sustainable growth that conserves land and energy. This effort will reduce pressure to expand the development envelope into the Agricultural Reserve by focusing on community-scaled redevelopment and reinvestment.

The planning focus will change from managing outward expansion of growth toward managing for a *specific type* of sustainable development within the existing development envelope: centers, boulevards, and public spaces. However, this focus on redevelopment will not diminish the commitment to sustaining and enhancing the quality of life our existing communities.

The transition to a mature, more intensively developed county will represent a conceptual change in the county's approach to planning: from the general to the specific. The General Plan framework will continue to be the general planning platform for the County. However, that framework, which succeeded in avoiding the general disorder of sprawl so prevalent in other suburban jurisdictions, is now set.

Success going forward will depend on guiding the county toward a specific form of development, one that provides the greatest improvement in the quality of life for all our citizens in the context of a mature, more intensively developed landscape. This is the vision behind the new focus on Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and Creating Great Public Spaces.

At the same time, the Department will continue to address affordable and workforce housing opportunities, while preserving the integrity of the Agricultural Reserve and ensuring livable environments worthy of a world-class metropolitan area.

Together with community stakeholders, government agencies and public leaders, the Department wants to begin to refine its planning focus. A *Planning Framework Report* (Attachment #1) has been prepared as a catalyst for further discussion.

The *Planning Framework Report* is intended to:

- respond to the Planning Board and County Council's request to explore the growth and market dynamics of our mature commercial centers;

- chronicle some of the key development trends and emerging land-use and market changes as the county nears residential build-out;
- offer a new planning perspective that captures future development potential through a more focused pattern of sustainable growth; and
- recognize the critical importance of engaging the community by creating opportunity for dialogue and guidance regarding the evolving planning agenda.

The *Planning Framework Report* recognizes national land use and redevelopment trends among inner-ring suburbs. Many inner-ring suburbs are transitioning from a traditional suburban development model servicing a central core to a more distributed urbanized model characterized by multiple mixed-use commercial centers connected by boulevards and neighborhoods with multiple public places.

Community-scaled mixed-use commercial centers and main streets are replacing strip developments as primary retail centers. Inner ring counties and communities are rediscovering the economic and community benefits of creating a “sense of place” by way of public open space and placemaking. Plazas, squares, and civic space are vital to success. Pedestrian access has become essential in promoting social, recreational, and economic activities.

Nationwide, major arterials designed to transport traffic into commercial areas are being transformed into boulevards with shared community uses. The mixed-use centers that are connected by the arterials are served by transit or express bus.

Our residents are already demonstrating a greater interest in living in unique places with unique characteristics. We know that people are attracted to, and have affection for, communities that provide a sense of comfort, safety, convenience, and sociability.

The Department will seek assistance from national experts as we begin to refocus our planning agenda. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a non-profit company adept at connecting community and decision-makers with the realities of change and redevelopment. The Department will work with PPS throughout fall and winter 2005.

PPS has received national recognition for working with jurisdictions to create community-friendly and community-scaled redevelopment programs by successfully engaging the community, planners, project implementers, and government representatives. PPS recognizes the importance of placemaking and high-quality design. They are skilled at rewiring planning and development processes to foster more collaborative planning and decision-making to better assure delivery of community vision and plan recommendations. Additionally, PPS has extensive experience in transforming segments of major arterials into people-friendly boulevards that truly become community assets.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND WORK PROGRAM

This new emphasis on planning centers, boulevards, and public spaces will be explored and further defined in a six-month participatory outreach effort. Beginning in fall 2005, the Department and PPS will engage community stakeholders, government agencies and public leaders to help reshape our planning focus. The *Framework Report* will be used as a catalyst for discussion. (See Attachment #2, Work Program and Community Outreach Schedule.)

In the near-term, however, the Department has developed an action strategy to address a range of critical land-use and transferable development right issues important to the well-being of the Agricultural Reserve in fall 2005 with community stakeholders.

This first phase of participatory outreach will culminate in February 2006 with a report to the Planning Board. Results from community outreach efforts will be presented and integrated into the report.

An approach to planning for centers, boulevards, and public spaces in the future will be outlined. Centers and segments of major transportation routes deemed appropriate for more detailed planning will be highlighted, along with unique public space and placemaking opportunities. Infrastructure requirements and performance criteria will be outlined.

Planning and implementation strategies will respond to community needs and aspirations gleaned from the fall outreach efforts. Market characteristics and economics will be reflected. Recommendations for policy, program, and procedural changes will be made.

The Department will also highlight the need for realignment of resources, programs, zones, and regulation to support this new planning effort.

CURRENT MASTER PLAN PROGRAM

The current Master Plan Program will continue on schedule and run coincidentally with and benefit from these efforts. Planning for mature commercial centers and major transportation and transit routes connecting those centers is already underway, such as Olney Town Center, Long Branch/University Boulevard, MD 355, and Wheaton CBD.

However, the Department believes that the scope and scale of the planning program will substantially change to emphasize small scale planning.

Since a substantial portion of Montgomery County's future growth will be located within the development envelope in the form of infill and redevelopment, more intensive community participation, smaller-scale planning, and collaborative implementation approaches will be required.

Planning approaches that focus on small-area planning must be designed to better assure that that private and public space functions well and contributes to overall neighborhood livability.

Planning at the finer grain will change the way we do business - a) new ways to cooperate and make decisions across agency lines to support and implement community vision and plan recommendations will be needed, b) unified processes to seamlessly conduct community outreach will be required, c) more effective ways to listen and respond to community needs and preferences must evolve, and d) expedited plan implementation processes must be developed including the use of streamlined master plan amendment processes and floating zones.

A planning framework that puts emphasis on planning at a smaller scale will obligate the county to reinvigorate how we regulate the pace of growth and assure residents and workers that roads, schools, and other public facilities will be adequate at the local level.

AUGMENTING CENTERS, BOULEVARDS, AND PUBLIC SPACES

The range of economic, demographic, land-use, and technological challenges emerging in the 21st Century requires a broad strategy for preparing county residents and businesses to better understand the myriad of issues so that they can make informed decisions and operate comfortably within the county in the years ahead.

To help expand community understanding and provide information to help the elected legislative and executive representatives develop long-term action agendas, the Department proposes to initiate a 10-month, *Our County, Our Future*, community discussion series.

The information gleaned from this effort will be delivered to the Planning Board and County Council in December 2006.

The series is comprised of the following three elements:

Discussion Series – A panel of engaging speakers and national experts will be invited to present their diverse opinions and perspectives about a specific topic. The discussion series will explore a range of pivotal issues that will affect the way we live in the future. Opportunity for small group discussion will be provided to explore additional viewpoints and possible solutions. Proceedings will be transcribed.

Countywide Telephone Survey – This survey will solicit opinion regarding issues such as, land use and lifestyle options, livability preferences, and shopping needs and patterns.

Community Focus Groups – These discussions will solicit opinion regarding issues land use and lifestyle options, livability preferences, and shopping needs and patterns.

The telephone survey and focus groups will be designed to qualitatively explore the range of options of designated or random populations and to gain insight into what underlies these attitudes. It is not in the scope of a study of this kind to quantitatively measure with statistical reliability the attitudes of the populations from which the sample was drawn or to correlate attitudes with demographic or other variables.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SMARTPARKS

Using innovative GIS and Database technologies, the SmartParks system provides detailed information about the parks systems to managers and administrators. This information significantly improves management decision-making, provides opportunities for more efficient and economical operation of our park system, and improves the stewardship and ethic of our workforce.

The implementation of SmartParks has also included a business process re-engineering effort. As a result, several improvements to our business processes have been instituted, in particular, the addition of a Service Center with the capability to take customer concerns and maintenance requests via phone, fax, and e-mail. The Service Center has been highly effective in capturing and documenting all work requests whether from the public, staff, or planned work. One significant benefit of the Service Center has been the uniformity of data entry and terminology which makes reporting much more accurate. To contact the Service Center, please call (301)670-8080.

GOALS OF SMARTPARKS

The primary goals of SmartParks are as follows:

- **Accurate accounting of costs by park** – The performance measures for the FY07 Operating Budget will be using SmartParks data for the first time. Staff is establishing a process for the management review of the data and to provide a structure for organizational response to that data. A series of meetings was held with senior park managers to review reports concerning athletic field maintenance costs. Regular reports are produced that are used by Central Maintenance for Capital Improvements Program (CIP) chargebacks.
- **Centrally managed park inventories** – With the implementation of SmartParks, the Department has developed a reliable inventory of parklands and facilities. This inventory of lands and facilities is readily accessible to park managers, park planners, and Department administrators through the Department's intranet. This provides a single point of access to data that had previously been scattered, incomplete, and often outdated. Staff is still completing this inventory that will bring together all the traditional items, such as athletic fields, buildings, trails, historic and archaeological park resources, as well as natural features such as streams, important habitat areas, specimen and significant trees.
- **Consistent data tracking** – The ability of SmartParks to track data has been of special assistance for ascertaining costs for unplanned events. So far this year, cleanup costs for four storms that have affected county parks costs have been tracked. Every work order created relating to a storm event was specifically linked to that specific storm. Once the work is completed, all of the costs for that storm will be tracked. A report will then be

prepared to summarize the costs for each storm, and at the end of the year, the total cost of storms for the year will be available.

In another effective use of data tracking, a legal action related to repairs at Brookside Gardens was countered using a SmartParks report that detailed the work done by Central Maintenance crews. This was possible because of the tracking of CIP and major maintenance projects using SmartParks.

- **Logical and efficient work processes** – A revised process has been implemented to better address the approval, assignment, tracking and completion of work. The work is organized and prioritized more efficiently and a significant amount of data is being collected related to the cost of maintenance activities. The Work Order Management system and Service Center concept fundamentally alter the flow of work, and the use of technology to track and manage resources and demands have altered the concept of park management. In addition, regular reports are also produced for each division that assists with the submission of accurate time cards.
- **Effective utilization of resources** – Using the work order management system, service coordinators at each maintenance yard organizes work according to priority and manages each crew's workload more effectively. This management of workload is enhanced by organizing the preventative maintenance tasks through SmartParks, and scheduling those tasks based on the work capacity of crews.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

- Maintenance standards for 11 additional major maintenance categories have been validated using a nationwide survey of other park systems. Staff is tracking attainment of these standards and additional standards in SmartParks.
- Staff is contracting for specialized training for park managers that will focus on the use of SmartParks data to further increase efficiency and effectiveness. In this training, experienced managers will instruct how information can be used to manage crew utilization, work flow, and work capacity.

ENTERPRISE FUND/PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Enterprise Division continued its efforts to implement the strategic plan that was developed during the fall of 2004, shortly after the formation of the Division. Chief among the continuing efforts to achieve fiscal stability, a major emphasis of the plan, has been a broadened and more coordinated marketing effort to increase awareness of Enterprise Fund facilities and programs and to build customer loyalty. A summary of Enterprise marketing activities is located on Attachment #3.

The council's approval of a Park Fund subsidy in FY06 to cover a portion of the debt service for ice rink construction assisted the Division in advancing its mission of "Providing Great Affordable, Active Recreation For All." During the upcoming budget cycle, emphasis will be placed on the need for a policy shift from the long-standing requirement that Enterprise Fund operations be totally self-sustaining through user fees and other non-tax sources.

As a follow-up to the September 2004 Gold Program Financial Review (Kendal Study) Enterprise Division staff commissioned a follow-up study (Steinbraker Study). The Kendal study analyzed the comparative performance of the public golf course operated by the Commission and the Montgomery County Revenue Authority. The objective of the Steinbraker Study was to work with Commission staff in identifying the policy, operational and structure changes needed to address the Kendal Study's conclusion that continuing under the same management policies and practices at Commission golf courses would lead to further strain on the Enterprise Fund. Included among the Steinbraker Study's recommendations were a number of new program initiatives, marketing strategies, and structural changes in the way employees are motivated and compensated in golf course operations. A number of the recommendations related to marketing and program initiatives have been fully implemented.

NEW PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A key component of the public/private partnerships concept is outreach within the Commission and to the public by the Partnerships Team to identify potential new partnership opportunities. Through internal and external discussions and site visits, partnership opportunities are identified. As a result of a request for comments on various partnership opportunities that were circulated last year, interest has been expressed in several possibilities. In addition, the Commission continues to be interested in new partnerships, which can be shown to have a positive impact on the community and Enterprise operations. The Commission will review the comments, the opportunities, and the potential for incorporating the proposed new partnerships into the work program in the next several months.

Current partnership proposals on which the Commission sought comment include:

- **Cabin John Train** – This is a small-scale train operating in Cabin John Regional Park. As a result of the input on this project, the Park Foundation has expressed an interest in

undertaking this project. At this time, the Foundation is evaluating the issues related to the train, its operation, and the building at the train site.

- **Chevy Chase Community Center** – In a new development – Wisconsin Place in Chevy Chase – the developer, New England Development, is providing a community center as a public amenity. Based on the input received from many sources during the review, the Commission and the Montgomery County Recreation Department (MCRD) are continuing to work on a cooperative basis to identify what will be required for MCRD to operate the facility.
- **Tennis** – There are possible partnership opportunities to develop new indoor tennis facilities in Cabin John Regional Park and Olney Manor Park. In addition, there is potential for reuse of the Wheaton Tennis facility should the indoor tennis move to Olney. In addition to the potential to change the tennis operations, MCRD has expressed an interest in the Wheaton tennis site as a potential for a community recreation facility. The Commission and MCRD are reviewing this concept. However, both agencies agree that the demands for the tennis facility must be evaluated before any determinations are made. Community input will be included as part of the evaluation process.

PROPOSED MASTER PLAN PROGRAM

The Master Plan Program has been revised in response to comments on the previous report and requests from the Council President and Council staff. With guidance from the Planning Board and County Council, the master plan schedule may change as the Department of Park and Planning develops strategic approaches for addressing land use challenges. The proposed master plan program focuses on the following:

- Completing the master plans and sector plans already identified in the current program
- Establishing new initiatives to be addressed in the long-range master plan program.

The proposed Master Plan Program is identified on the enclosed schedule. Completing the master plans and sector plans already identified by the County Council is the first priority of the Community-Based Planning Division.

Montgomery County’s long-term commitment to principled land use planning and growth management has been key to attracting and retaining residents, businesses, and workers. Adherence to the “Wedges and Corridors” concept, which has been strongly backed by political leadership, has enabled the county to avoid the consequences of unrestrained development, unacceptable losses of parkland and farmland, and fragmented suburbs. The result has been a stable and desirable market environment that offers a broad range of choice.

Montgomery County must remain committed to sustainable development that balances economic and environmental concerns and serves the needs of a changing population. Within its reach are the tools and opportunities to revitalize its centers, to improve the form and function of its major travel routes, and to sustain its unique rural and open space character.

MASTER PLAN SCHEDULE

SHADY GROVE SECTOR PLAN PLAN INITIATION: JULY 2002

This planning effort recommends establishing a mixed-use community, creating a multi-modal transit station, establishing safe pedestrian access, protecting existing neighborhoods from traffic impacts, and improving public open spaces and amenities. The County Council conducted work sessions during the last six months.

MILESTONES	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT INITIATION	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	June 2003	October 2003	
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	July 2003	November 2003	
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	January 2004	September 2004	
COUNCIL APPROVAL	August 2004	October 2005	

**DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN
PLAN INITIATION: JULY 2002**

This master plan has been coordinated with the efforts on the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan and the Olney Master Plan. The Public Hearing Draft was completed during the last six months, and the Planning Board is conducting work sessions.

MILESTONES	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT INITIATION	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	January 2004	August 2004	
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	February 2004	September 2004	
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	August 2004	September 2005	
COUNCIL APPROVAL	March 2005	November 2005	April 2006

**WOODMONT TRIANGLE AMENDMENT TO THE SECTOR PLAN FOR THE BETHESDA CBD
PLAN INITIATION: OCTOBER 2003**

The Planning Board Draft was completed and transmitted to the County Council. The work sessions with the Planning Board identified a vision, the challenges and the actions necessary to improve the Woodmont Triangle District.

MILESTONES	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME AT INITIATION*	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	March 2004	April 2004	
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	April 2004	May 2004	
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	July 2004	December 2004	
COUNCIL APPROVAL	December 2004	July 2005	February 2006

**TWINBROOK SECTOR PLAN
PLAN INITIATION: JULY 2003**

Coordination between the Shady Grove Sector Plan and the Twinbrook Sector Plan is a key feature. This planning effort also includes careful coordination with the City of Rockville. A focus of this effort includes providing opportunities for housing, advanced technology, biotechnology and light industrial uses.

MILESTONES	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT INITIATION	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	December 2004	March 2005	September 2005
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	January 2005	April 2005	October 2005
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	July 2005	August 2005	October 2006
COUNCIL APPROVAL	February 2006	February 2006	May 2007

**GAITHERSBURG VICINITY MASTER PLAN
PLAN INITIATION: JULY 2002**

Coordination between the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan and the Shady Grove Sector Plan as well as the planning efforts in the City of Rockville and the City of Gaithersburg are key features of this planning effort. This planning effort should be coordinated with the M-83 Facility Plan, and it may be delayed.

MILESTONES	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT INITIATION	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	January 2004	March 2005	October 2006
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	February 2004	April 2004	November 2006
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	August 2004	August 2005	May 2007
COUNCIL APPROVAL	March 2005	February 2006	December 2007

**KENSINGTON SECTOR PLAN
PLAN INITIATION: MAY 2006**

The Kensington Sector Plan will include the entire incorporated municipality of the Town of Kensington, the neighborhood commercial center at the intersection of University Boulevard and Connecticut Avenue, the area located west of the town and north of Knowles Avenue, the Howard Avenue Antique District, and the Ken-Gar community. The planning efforts will focus on the commercial center of the town. It will evaluate land use, zoning, transportation, and revitalization options. Public participation will include town residents, elected officials, and residents of surrounding communities that rely on the commercial area for services.

MILESTONES	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME AT INITIATION	TIME FRAME APPROVED AT PREVIOUS BI-ANNUAL REPORT	RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME CHANGES
MPAG APPOINTMENT	NA		
STAFF DRAFT	October 2007		
PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN	November 2007		
PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN	May 2008		
COUNCIL APPROVAL	December 2008		

DATE FOR COUNTY COUNCIL TO RECEIVE MASTER PLANS/ SECTOR PLANS

MASTER PLAN	SCHEDULED DATES TO RECEIVE MASTER PLANS	EXPECTED DATES TO RECEIVE MASTER PLANS*
Communities in the Northern Headwaters		
Olney Master Plan	Completed 2005	Completed 2005
Damascus Master Plan	April 2005	September 2005
I-270 Corridor		
Shady Grove Sector Plan	September 2004	September 2004
Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan	August 2005	May 2007
Twinbrook Sector Plan	August 2005	October 2006
Germantown Master Plan	November 2006	October 2007
Communities of the Urban Ring		
Woodmont Triangle	December 2004	December 2004
Kensington/University Boulevard	November 2006	May 2008
Westbard Sector Plan	July 2008	October 2008
Wheaton CBD/Georgia Avenue	July 2008	May 2009
Takoma/Langley Crossroads	January 2008	October 2009
Bi-County Transitway	TBD	TBD

Note: * In accordance with the request by the County Council, the schedule has also been adjusted to stagger the receipt of master plans. A delay of the Gaithersburg Master Plan will be needed to coordinate with the M-83 Facility Plan.

HOUSING INITIATIVES

In 2001, the Montgomery County Council adopted a new housing policy, entitled “Montgomery County: The Place to Call Home.” The county’s vision acknowledges the importance of safe, decent, and affordable housing for “a full, normal life,” that all residents should have “decent housing in sound neighborhoods,” and that housing should be affordable for all who live or work in the county, regardless of age or position.

Much of the focus of Montgomery County’s housing vision is focused on two income tiers: the Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) tier and the \$40,000-or-less tier. In recent years, as home prices continue to accelerate beyond the reach of many working families, the county has become concerned that households earning higher incomes – even close to the area median income – are struggling to find housing that is affordable.

Among the ways the Department of Park and Planning supports the County’s housing vision: tracking and reporting on housing production and sales, researching and analyzing supply and demand issues, and identifying opportunities for a range of housing choices in proposed development plans.

SUMMARY OF HOUSING PROJECTS SINCE APRIL 1, 2005

- **Workforce Housing Policy Issues** –In association with relevant agencies, staff completed significant research and policy analysis in anticipation of workforce housing policy discussions in fall of 2005. The research included a review of a variety of supply and demand data and other research needed to recommend a definition of workforce housing, to describe the current availability of such housing, and to recommend policies and goals. Department staff met with staff from the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Housing Opportunities Commission, and the County Council, to identify areas for further study, which were subsequently completed. As workforce housing issues arise, staff is ready to provide analysis and policy recommendations to the Planning Board.
- **Update of *Need for Housing for Older Adults in Montgomery County*** – This 2001 report, prepared at the direction of the County Council, is being updated in response to a request from the County Council in the spring of 2005. Consultant and former Department staff member, Sally Roman, has been retained to help with this task. Inventories, demographics, and policy recommendations will be addressed in this top-to-bottom update of this important reference tool. Department staff anticipates completion of the update by October of 2005.
- **Housing Affordability Statement** – Beginning in March, a *Housing Affordability Statement*, began accompanying pre-application plans, preliminary plans, and site plans. The use of the Housing Impact Statement will soon be extended to area master plans, sector plans, functional plans, re-zonings, and mandatory referrals (including federal and county capital improvement programs) throughout the entire review process.

- **Development Review Committee** – The Research Center continues to serve as an advocate for housing within the Department by identifying and promoting opportunities for a variety of housing types and income ranges as development projects are reviewed and master plans prepared. Also, housing staff prepared an MPDU calculator tool that incorporates the requirements of the next ordinance, which has been added to the Department’s website.
- **Core Competency Curricula** – Seminars are periodically scheduled with internal and external experts to sharpen staff skills needed to perform daily work. Called the “Core Competency Curriculum,” this occasional series focused on housing issues in the past year. Because much local government research depends on the State Tax Assessor’s data for assessments and sales, the Department sponsored a Core Competency Curriculum session on the assessor’s data and methodology in July. A representative from the SDAT discussed the methodology used to assess property, some of the special challenges of assessments in rapidly appreciating areas, and some of the strengths and limitations of the use of this data, in general. In the next quarter, the Department will conduct a Core Competency Curriculum on the recent changes to the MPDU ordinance.
- **Interjurisdictional Housing Affordability Study** – Data from seven surrounding jurisdictions was collected and analyzed by Department staff to determine the availability of affordable housing in neighboring localities and to compare out-migration data to those counties. The study was prepared at the request of the County Council. The report is complete, albeit undergoing final editing by early October, and the study will be published in a user-friendly form during the next quarter.
- **The 55+ Housing Survey** – The results of this survey were published in the spring of 2005, and the brochure is available on the Department web as well as in the Research & Technology Center. Staff presented the findings to the Montgomery County Commission on Aging in July. The presentation is available on the Department website.
- **Montgomery County Affordable Housing Conference 2005** – Department staff provided research support to the Affordable Housing Conference, held in May. Support included the preparation of a “Housing Snapshot,” as well as data support for the conference materials.
- **Mature Commercial Area Study** – One of the goals for this study, which is integrated with “Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and Creating Great Public Spaces,” is to identify opportunities for additional housing on existing underutilized commercial centers. A highlight of the last six months was an Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel in July that examined the issues, constraints, realities, and opportunities of redeveloping centers. In support of the technical assistance panel (and the study generally), staff prepared an inventory of existing centers as well as background data, analysis, and research. The ULI team presented its final report to the Planning Board in mid-September.

- **Housing Snapshot** – A new chart reflecting recent housing activity, follows:

HOUSING SNAPSHOT

January 1 to June 30, 2005

2004 EXISTING HOUSING UNITS	SFD	SFA	MF	MPDUs	MPDUs Bought Out	Other Affordable Housing	TDRs Used
Total Countywide	180,452	71,299	105,467	12,230	338	16,570	10,429
January 1 to June 30, 2005 HOUSING COMPLETIONS	SFD	SFA	MF	MPDUs	MPDUs Bought Out	Other Affordable Housing	TDRs Used
Total Countywide	430	240	723	130	79	51	10
January 1 to June 30, 2005 PIPELINE APPROVALS	SFD	SFA	MF	MPDUs	Other Affordable Housing		
Total Countywide	620	363	1,458	282	67		

Note: There have not been any MPDU buyout agreements since April 1, 2005.

Sources: (1) For Existing Housing Units—U.S. Census 2000 and the Montgomery County Office of the MD Dept. of Assessments and Taxation; MPDUs—DHCA and the City of Rockville; Other Affordable Housing—HOC and the Cities of Rockville & Gaithersburg; TDRs—M-NCPPC TDR reports for 1997, 1999, as well as a review of the Development Review Database. (2) For Housing Completions—the Montgomery County Office of the MD Dept. of Assessments and Taxation; MPDUs—DHCA and the City of Rockville; Other Affordable Housing—HOC and the City of Rockville; TDRs—the M-NCPPC Development Review Database. (3) For Pipeline Approvals—the M-NCPPC Development Review Database and the Cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg. This information is preliminary in nature, and represents a best estimate for several of the reporting categories. Ongoing studies in the areas of TDRs and non-MPDU affordable housing, for example, may result in refined totals, once these studies are completed. In addition, some information represents coordination between several agencies, and such information may be refined after reporting criteria is finalized.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Although data for FY05 is still being collected, preliminary results indicate that volunteers provided over 48,800 hours of service to the Department. The Volunteer program has advanced to include 1,040 individual volunteers working on a regular basis in facilities and programs throughout the system.

It is important to note that the currency of volunteerism is typically expressed in hours. But that figure does not reflect the positive impact of volunteers on our ability to provide services. Our most popular and well attended events and programs could not occur without the vital support of volunteers.

The non-profit organization, Independent Sector, provides an hourly equivalency for quantifying the dollar volunteer labor. At the current rate, the Department received over \$856,896 in value added service from volunteers. However, even that figure does not reflect the outreach and education value inherent in volunteerism or the morale boosting effects that these community partners have on paid staff.

In April, one of our star volunteers was awarded the Governor's Volunteer Service Award. Ms. Linda Williams, a Brookside Gardens volunteer, was nominated by Brookside Gardens staff for her work as an art show coordinator and gardener assistant at that facility. Since January 2003, Ms. Williams contributed almost 600 hours of outstanding volunteer service to the Department.

We have significant volunteer involvement in such areas as:

- Trail construction and renovation
- Park patrols
- Managed deer hunts
- Archaeology and historic interpretation
- Public gardens
- Invasive plant control
- Nature programs
- Wildlife & habitat restoration
- Litter control
- Reforestation
- Children's camps
- Park planning activities

Over 225 projects and events were conducted by episodic volunteers serving a total of over 17,500 hours for these special activities. A partial list of volunteer projects for this reporting period include:

- Brookside Gardens participated in the Kennedy High School Leadership Program. Two students, James Cahill and Jonatan Pribluda, volunteered 300 hours of service working for various areas at Brookside.

- Potomac River Cleanup Day involved 540 volunteers performing 1,363 hours of service at 14 project sites throughout parks in April. This service day is one of 107 group projects occurring in parks over this period.
- Marriott Spirit to Serve Day involved 271 employees at nine sites contributing 950 hours. This is one of 10 corporate volunteer projects coordinated through the Volunteer Services Office during this period. Participating companies included Lockheed Martin, Ricoh Copiers, Bovis Construction, Discovery, BB&T, Winchester Homes, and others.
- Weed Warriors posted their first quarter with over 1,000 hours of service and have grown to include a new volunteer training class every month from March through October, with most of the classes filling to capacity weeks in advance.
- Volunteers completed three reforestation projects to plant 450 trees in three park locations to enhance stream buffers, protect water quality and provide wildlife habitat.
- Wings of Fancy Butterfly Show which runs daily, May through September, is staffed by over 165 volunteers. A new attendance record was set this year with over 45,000 visitors.
- Approximately 30 Park Police citizen volunteers patrolled the park system and participated in community activities during this reporting period. Volunteers also conducted 44 speed surveys on park roadways as a component of the traffic management program.
- A new initiative was launched to develop web-based training opportunities for the Brookside Gardens Butterfly Show volunteers and Oakley Cabin Docents.
- The Volunteer Services Office coordinated several volunteer recognition events in support of volunteers throughout the Department.

CENTRAL MAINTENANCE PROJECT REPORT

STATUS OF ONGOING PROJECTS

Major Maintenance

- Norbeck Recreation Center – power washed and painted exterior of building.
- Cloverly Local Park – completed concrete repairs to sidewalks.
- Cabin John Indoor Tennis – painted exterior doors to building.
- Brookside’s Sycamore House – painted exterior of building.
- Paint Branch Trail – repaired drainage on washed-out trail.
- Rockwood Manor – repaired brick pillar at front entrance.
- Damascus Recreational Park – replaced roof on Shelter B.
- Pope Farm Nursery – installed concrete floor in storage shed.
- Rock Creek Regional Park – installed electric service to shelters.
- Wheaton Regional Park – installed surveillance camera in maintenance yard.
- Fabricated displays for booth at Montgomery County Agricultural Fair.
- Saddlebrook – completed renovation of archives, park police, and exhibits areas.
- Shady Grove – installed security cameras and completed renovation of auto shop.
- Brookside Gardens Fritz Greenhouse renovation completed and replacement of timber steps at Brookside Nature Center.
- Gunner’s Lake Local Park – replaced shelter.
- Agricultural History Farm Park – replaced carriage shed roof and painted.
- Completed installation of Kronos timeclocks in multiple locations.

CIP Projects

- Olney Mill Neighborhood Park – repaved paths and constructed drainage ditch.
- Owens Local Park – completed installation of new septic tank.
- Energy – retrofitted thermostats in multiple locations.
- Built and installed kiosks in the following areas: Agricultural History Farm Park, Rock Creek Regional Park, South Germantown Recreation Park, Little Seneca Stream Valley Unit #1, Blockhouse Point Conservation Park, Kingsley Trail Head, and Prescott Road in Little Bennett Regional Park.

PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT

PARK ACQUISITION PROGRAM

Since the last biannual report, the Department has spent nearly \$5 million on new park acquisitions under the Acquisition: Local; Acquisition-Non-local; and Legacy Open Space Project Description Forms (PDFs). These include the Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park Addition; the fourth of five installments in the Piney Grove Serpentine Area; the fourth of five installments at the Callethia Farm Park; and an addition to Upper Paint Branch Watershed. Also, parkland dedications were received at two locations through the development review process. Acreage added to the park system through these acquisitions totaled nearly 70 acres, bringing the total park acreage in our park system to approximately 32,900 acres.

The purchase of additional properties for future public use is under negotiation including but not limited to lands in the following parks: Hyattstown Forest, Hyattstown Historic Area, River Road Shale Barrens, Hoyles Mill Conservation Park, Rachel Carson Conservation Park, the Carroll Place Heritage Resource, Woodstock Special Park, and Cross Creek Local Park. Also, a contract will be presented to the Council shortly for the acquisition of the Layman property as right-of-way for the Mid-County Highway. The Layman property is to be acquired using the Commission's Advanced Land Acquisition Revolving Fund (ALARF).

PARK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Park Development Division has over 200 active projects. This section highlights only a sample of those projects.

Facility planning has been completed for the following projects:

- Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park (LP)
- Germantown Town Center LP
- Elmhirst Parkway Neighborhood Conservation Area

Facility planning/planning studies are underway for the following projects:

- Rock Creek Regional Park Water and Sewer System Rehabilitation
- North Four Corners LP
- Greenbriar LP
- Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park (NP)
- Magruder Branch SVU#2 Trail
- Trail Connector Analysis
- Falls Road LP expanded parking
- Darnestown Square Urban Park (UP)
- Stream Restoration at Sligo Creek and Northwest Golf Courses

The following projects are in the design or permitting phase:

- Concord LP Renovation
- Winding Creek LP Reconstruction
- Playground Renovations (5 local parks)
- Matthew Henson Trail- Phases 1, 2, and 3 (Matthew Henson State Park and Greenway)
- Broad Acres LP
- Rock Creek Trail pedestrian bridge at Susanna Lane
- Gunner's Branch/Paint Branch SVU#5/Little Falls SVU#1 stream protection
- Rickman Horse Farm Park parking lot and riding ring
- Repairs to Sligo Creek Parkway retaining walls
- Rock Creek pedestrian bridge over Veirs Mill Road
- East Norbeck LP renovation
- Brookside Gardens irrigation upgrades
- Hoyles Mill LP (West Germantown Development District)
- Structural stabilization of Woodlawn Barn
- Pope Farm Nursery utilities upgrade
- Becca Lilly NP pedestrian bridge replacement
- Cloverly LP parking lot expansion
- Olney Square NP parking addition
- Stormwater management retrofit at Hunters Woods LP and University Boulevard/Kemp Mill pond

The following projects have completed the design and permitting phases:

- Cross Creek LP parking lot
- Concord LP renovation

The following projects are under construction:

- Total park renovations: Jesup Blair LP, Montgomery Village LP
- Playground Renovations: Fleming LP, Glen Echo Heights NP, Glenfield LP, Pleasant View LP, Cloverly LP
- Equestrian trails and Greenberg parking lot at Woodstock Special Park
- Retrofit of two stormwater management ponds in Muddy Branch SVU#3
- National Capital Trolley Museum sitework and car barn
- Stabilization of Joseph White House
- Meadowbrook Maintenance Yard covered storage bins
- Tennis Court Renovations: Dewey LP, English Manor NP, Georgian Forest LP, Maplewood-Alta Vista LP, Redland LP, Ayrlawn LP, Longwood LP, North Gate LP, Good Hope LP, Beverly Farms LP, Darnestown LP, Fountain Hills LP, and Evans Parkway NP

The following projects were completed during the reporting period:

- Playground renovations at Norwood LP, Hillmead LP and Cabin John Regional Park
- Crystal Rock Trail
- Kings Crossing LP (West Germantown Development District)
- Lighting upgrade to Field No. 1 at Olney Manor Recreational Park
- Long Branch stream restoration
- Resurfacing of Sligo Creek Parkway from Colesville Road to Dennis Avenue
- Becca Lilly NP temporary pedestrian bridge
- Olney Manor Maintenance Yard covered bins
- On-site water and sewer mains serving Woodlawn Cultural Park
- Stormwater management retrofit at Long Branch-Wayne Avenue LP
- Stream Protection projects in Gunner's Branch, Little Falls SVU#1, and Paint Branch SVU#5
- NPDES compliance measures at Olney Manor Park Maintenance
- Tennis Court Renovations at: Columbia LP, Clarksburg NP, Sangamore LP, Peachwood NP, Westmoreland Hills LP

GENERAL UPDATE ON DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

BALLFIELD INITIATIVES

- With the FY06 budget, Phase Two of our Ballfield Initiatives has begun. The focus of our efforts has shifted to the renovation and improvement of park fields. Contracts are in place for turf renovations and fencing. We are awaiting bids for infield renovations and an Invitation for Bid (IFB) is being prepared by Park Development Division (PDD) for the installation of synthetic turf in the goalmouths of soccer fields. Staff continues to maintain the renovated athletic fields at the elementary and middle schools.

CARRY-IN, CARRY-OUT (CICO)

- After a 12-month implementation period, an evaluation report of the Carry-In, Carry-Out program was submitted for discussion purposes with the County Council. In the report, the Department recommended that the CICO program be discontinued given the very mixed results of the program, very little cost savings realized, numerous citizen complaints, and the negative aesthetic experience of most park users. In spring 2005, the Council directed the Department to end the program and restore trash cans to the parks. Restoration of trash cans to parks is scheduled for completion by the end of September.

Separate from any decision on CICO, some solid waste management program savings will continue to be realized, and other implementation measures recommended by the Intensive Budget Review (IBR) have led to a more efficient operation.

COMMAND SPANISH®

- The fourth Community Command Spanish® class, taught by Montgomery College, will be held for Department employees this fall. To date, the total number of employees completing this program is over 80. Command Spanish® is a non-academic, non-grammar based program designed for those who want an easy and quick way to learn limited amounts of everyday Spanish. Staff from every division in the Department has participated in the classes. Montgomery County Park Police will be holding up to four classes over the next year that will identify key words and phrases geared specifically for law enforcement officer use.

DEER MANAGEMENT

- Natural Resource Management staff conducted meetings of the Deer Management Work Group, which reviewed data and prepared and released the Deer Report and Recommendations for FY2006. The FY06 budget included a new initiative of \$62,000 to expand this program. In addition to continuing deer management actions in 14 parks, five new actions will be implemented this fall after review of public comments.

DIVERSITY ACTION INITIATIVE

- As the county becomes increasingly diverse, the Department is continuing to develop strategies to ensure that it operates on principles that speak inclusively to everyone – residents and employees. Planning for the Diversity Action Initiative began in June 2004 when the Diversity Leadership Team (DLT) was formed. The DLT spent several months analyzing the diversity-related challenges and opportunities in the Department’s role in planning and park services and completed a Diversity Action Plan in early 2005. This Plan guides the Department’s efforts to promote, incorporate, evaluate, and implement a variety of strategies. Action Area Teams have been formed and are developing implementation strategies in each of the following areas:
 - **Work Environment** – Promote excellent working relationships among employees and maintain a work environment that respects diversity and promotes inclusion.
 - **Employee Development and Training** – Provide training to the entire workforce that promotes cultural competence and an inclusive environment, including customer service for diverse communities.
 - **Management Practices** – Management must demonstrate an understanding of and support for a diverse, cross-cultural work environment.
 - **Recruitment, Promotion and Selection** – Ensure recruitment, hiring and promotion practices that reflect our commitment to diversity.
 - **Community Outreach** – Strengthen partnerships with diverse communities that foster mutual understanding and support particularly as they relate to both the park and planning functions that require significant community outreach. Enhance the provision of excellent customer service to our diverse customer base.
 - **Vendor Diversity Practices** – Ensure that the Department’s suppliers and service providers reflect and support the diversity of the overall community.

Implementation plans are to be finalized by January 2006. The Department is also identifying “low-hanging fruit” – action items that may be implemented within a short period of time. An evaluation component is being integrated into the Initiative to include benchmarking and performance measures.

INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

- In January 2005, the County Council President initiated the “Infrastructure Maintenance Task Force.” The task force was charged with quantifying backlogs for repair and lifecycle replacement of major components of infrastructure and calculating funding levels needed to eliminate backlogs. The work of the task force resulted in \$1,768,000 being added to M-NCPPC’s FY06 capital budget. Projects currently underway with this additional funding include:
 - Fencing replacements at various local and non-local parks
 - Replacement of the pedestrian bridge at Gunners Branch Local Park
 - Reinforced undermined segment trail at Little Falls Parkway
 - Repair of stream intake for Little Bennett Golf Pond

- Riser repairs at Kings Pond in Kings Local Park
- Repair of failing headwall Rock Creek Trail storm water management facility
- Roof replacements at Wheaton Community Center and Bethesda Chevy Chase
- Repair of retaining walls and drainage at Sligo Creek and Wayne Avenue
- Various parking lot paving projects

A total of \$600,000 was added to the departmental budget (\$300,000 operating and \$300,000 CIP) related to infrastructure maintenance and involved major maintenance work performed in the Central Maintenance Division in response to a work order backlog. See Attachment #8 “Central Maintenance Status Report” for a more complete list of projects.

The Park Development Division received \$150,000 in the FY06 budget to conduct an inventory assessment of park infrastructure. This is a three-year project that will verify the existing park inventory; establish rating criteria for condition assessment of park components; perform condition assessment at selected locations; and prepare a life cycle assessment and cost analysis of the existing infrastructure. An RFP has been prepared to hire a firm or team of firms with specialized expertise and experience in the areas of infrastructure inventory and assessment.

NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

- Staff received approval for a new initiative for FY06 to expand the non-native invasive plant (NNI) management efforts to protect natural ecosystems. NRM managed NNI projects in multiple locations within nine parks covering 76 acres using park staff, private contractors, and volunteers. Staff work has continued with Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Public Works and Transportation to incorporate NNI management on projects that involve impacts to parkland from non-park projects. NRM partnered with Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) on an experimental project along Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, using goats to eat vegetation.

PARK PERMITTING PROCESS

- The increased usage of local parks for a variety of sports and social activities has led to some conflicts with neighboring residents. To seek solutions, staff held three public forums throughout the county in November and December, which were attended by park users, residents, and staff. Solutions seemed to fall into five basic categories: enforcement, park maintenance, park design, permitting, and outreach. Because the discussions also indicated that the problems were not just park-related, staff shared the results of the forums with representatives of the County Executive, the County Council, the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities, regional service centers, and the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Collectively, these government agencies, along with input from area residents and park users, are developing workable strategies to make local park usage accessible to all while reducing the conflicts that currently exist.

PARK POLICE “HOTSPOT” PROGRAM

- In response to concerns about park usage throughout the county, Park Police developed a list of “Hotspot” parks that demanded more attention during the summer months. The list of parks was developed from calls for service, maintenance requests for clean up, permit violations, and citizen complaints through the “smart park” system. To increase Park Police interaction with the communities adjacent to the “Hotspot” parks, officers knocked on doors and handed out pamphlets with information on how to contact Park Police. An assessment of the effectiveness of this project is underway.

Park Police conducted just over 200 additional hours of patrol in the Longbranch area as a result of a Weed & Seed grant. The additional patrols were completed on foot, bike, motorcycle, and traditional vehicular patrol. Officers continue to regularly attend community meetings with the Weed & Seed Steering Committee, the Longbranch Task Force, the Longbranch Neighborhood Initiative, and the Longbranch Business Association workgroups.

ParkPASS

- The ParkPASS system continues to grow. In the past months, four more facilities have been integrated into the ParkPASS system, and a joint Program Guide with the Montgomery County Recreation Department was published. Improvements to the system by the Research and Technology Division have provided better customer service as well as bolstered client confidence in the reliability of ParkPASS. Highlights of these past few months include:
 - There are over 26,500 park users registered in the ParkPASS system - with more being added everyday via walk-in, mail, and online account set-up options.
 - Online registrations account for approximately 50% of registration activity and allow for public access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
 - Online site visits average over 100 hits a day and continues to grow.

A Planning Framework Report
WORKING DRAFT

Revitalizing Centers...

Reshaping Boulevards...

Creating Great Public Spaces

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
OCTOBER 6, 2005

The intent of this Framework Report is fourfold:

- to respond to the Planning Board and County Council's request to explore the growth and market dynamics of our mature commercial centers;
- to chronicle some of the key development trends and emerging land-use and market changes as the County nears residential build-out;
- to offer a new planning perspective that captures future development potential through a more focused pattern of sustainable growth: and
- to recognize the critical importance of engaging the community by creating broad opportunity for dialogue, guidance, and good counsel regarding key issues, community visions and needs, and implementation approaches.

Introduction

A planning framework focused on *Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and Creating Great Public Spaces* is the logical next step for Montgomery County, given our planning objectives, development history, and future expectations.

- **Greenfield development is almost over.** In past decades, “growth” meant the development of large tracts of vacant land. Although some large vacant tracts remain, most of Montgomery County’s future growth will be located within the development envelope in the form of infill and redevelopment. This approach will differ from greenfield development and require more intensive community participation, detailed planning and collaborative implementation approaches.
- **With the exception of transit, outward expansion of infrastructure is no longer a priority.** The County does not want to develop the Agricultural Reserve, nor does it envision redeveloping established residential neighborhoods. Instead, new infrastructure will focus on reinforcing existing centers through transit-oriented (e.g., Silver Spring, Wheaton) or transit-ready (e.g., Gaithersburg, Tacoma/Langley, Kentlands, Clarksburg) development.
- **In the next 25 years, the County will add 170,000 jobs, 94,000 housing units, and 213,800 people.** That’s an average of 19 jobs, 10 housing units, and 23 people per day. All of the job growth and most of the housing and population growth is permitted under the zoning and master plans that have already been adopted.
- **Some of the County’s existing commercial centers have potential for absorbing additional growth.** The County has over 1,500 areas of commercially zoned land that, under current zoning, could be redeveloped into more than 29 million square feet of commercial space. In many of these areas, a mix of jobs and housing could be a preferable alternative to commercial development alone. Housing is not currently permitted on these parcels, but if rezoned to allow 15 residential units per acre, 9,200 housing units could be added to the County’s housing stock.¹
- **The County needs more affordable housing.** Home prices are increasing faster than wages in Montgomery County. In addition, there are about 50 years of commercial development in currently approved plans, but only about 25 years of housing development. This will put further pressure on housing costs. The County needs more housing choices that are affordable to a wider range of families.

While the need for housing exists throughout the County, the biggest imbalance is in existing commercial centers that are job-rich and housing-poor. Multi-family units, built

¹ It is by no means a forgone conclusion that meeting critical housing needs will require higher densities than currently permitted. Currently permitted densities, reallocated among a broader mix of uses (trading commercial density for residential density), may be sufficient to achieve the goal of increased housing within our commercial centers while also accommodating the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

at densities sensitive to surrounding areas, are appropriate for redeveloped centers and along some transportation routes.

- **The planning focus will change from large-scale master plans to smaller area planning.** There is an ever-increasing public demand for public spaces in more intensely developed areas. The Department needs a planning process that focuses on small-area planning to better assure that every piece of public space functions well. Management and programming of public spaces through well-planned street furniture, amenities, shared uses, tree-plantings, etc., will also be an increased priority. It is not only the public spaces, but also the diversity of activities that they accommodate, that create the affection for place needed to develop vital community-scaled centers.
- **Two keys to successfully accommodating growth in existing commercial centers: vitality and quality-of-life.** The County will seek both: (1) remove the impediments to desirable infill development and redevelopment, and (2) support community-scaled mixed-use, multifamily development and adjacent residential neighborhoods with amenity and infrastructure improvements that enhance livability, walkability, and over-all quality of life.
- **Sustaining the quality of life in areas not planned for additional growth or significant redevelopment will be emphasized throughout the entire planning program.** The planning focus will change from managing outward expansion and the overall pace of growth toward managing for a *specific type* of sustainable development within the existing development envelope: centers, boulevards, and public spaces. However, this focus on redevelopment should not diminish the commitment to sustaining and enhancing the quality of life in communities not planned for growth or substantial redevelopment, including the Agricultural Reserve. The Department will look for ways to improve the economic linkages between these two areas so that overall quality of life improves across the entire landscape of Montgomery County.
- **A planning framework that puts less emphasis on large-area master plans means that other tools, such as the growth policy, will need to be strengthened to stage planned development.** The major demographic, economic and livability issues that compel a new planning focus also oblige the County to reinvigorate how we regulate the pace of growth and assure residents and workers that roads, schools and other public facilities will be adequate at the local level.
- **The Chesapeake Bay Agreement calls for the reduction of *harmful sprawl* within the Bay's watershed.** To achieve this goal, the County should concentrate its development in areas zoned for more than two houses per acre and served by existing public sewer. Concentrated development will lead to a greater reliance on renewable resources by reducing dependence on cars and taking advantage of transit. Transit is fuel-efficient and reduces air pollution. In addition, buildings themselves can be highly energy efficient. *Green buildings* can make a difference in exactly how environmentally sustainable our future will be.

The transition to a mature, more developed County will represent a conceptual change in County's approach to planning: from the general to the specific. The General Plan framework will continue to be the general planning platform for the County. However, that framework, which succeeded in avoiding the general disorder of sprawl so prevalent in other suburban jurisdictions, is now set.

Success going forward will depend on guiding the County toward a specific form of development, one that provides the greatest improvement in the quality of life for all our citizens in the context of a mature, more urbanized landscape. This is the vision behind the new focus on Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and Creating Great Public Spaces.

I. Executive Summary

For more than 40 years, Montgomery County has been a national leader in creating quality living environments for its residents.

We've also seen our population double, our number of housing units triple, and our jobs quadruple. Within two generations, the County's character has changed dramatically from a bedroom community with a few employment centers to a major employment, commercial, and population center--home to more of Maryland's population and economic activity than any other jurisdiction in the State. Montgomery County has grown into a major urbanized area.

Thanks to a long-term commitment to principled land use planning, backed by strong political leadership, this growth has also enhanced the quality of life for our residents. The creation and continued preservation of the 93,000-acre Agricultural Reserve in the northern and western region of the County has avoided unacceptable loss of farmland and parkland.

Much of our natural heritage is being preserved through an extensive 33,000-acre park system and an innovative land conservation program, Legacy Open Space. At the same time, the County has created a stable market environment that offers a large range of residential and business growth choices.

The major trends that will be faced by Montgomery County in the next 25 years are:

- Growth will continue. Montgomery County is forecast to add at least 170,000 new jobs and 94,000 new housing units by 2030. This is like adding the combined development in Rockville and Gaithersburg. Most of this growth is already permitted under the zoning and master plans that have already been adopted.
- While suburban areas will see the most job growth, many of the parcels where additional housing can be built involve infill development or redevelopment. The I-270 Corridor has the planned capacity for the majority of new jobs, led by Rockville and followed by Germantown, North Bethesda, Clarksburg, and Gaithersburg. Some of the County's planned capacity for new housing is located in the northern part of the corridor and adjacent to the northern portion of the Agricultural Reserve, but most of it consists of

redevelopment and infill opportunities in down-County areas such as Bethesda, North Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Wheaton.

- As a result, future growth in Montgomery County will be more urban than in the past. According to our adopted plans, most new housing units--approximately 60 percent -- will be condominiums and apartments; many offices, stores, and other commercial activities will be clustered around existing and proposed transit stations.
- Regional trends will have an even greater impact on the County. As the region expands (by an estimated 2 million people and 1.6 million jobs over the next 25 years) inner suburbs like Montgomery County are increasingly affected by the cumulative impacts of decisions made in the surrounding jurisdictions.

Forty years ago our population was small--but growing rapidly. Planners focused on answering the following questions: Which areas of the County should be developed? How will use *greenfields* to our advantage? Where ought major transportation facilities be located? How can we provide a park system and open space network to serve the needs of a growing population?

Answers to the questions came in the form of the County-wide General Plan, “...*On Wedges and Corridors*”—adopted in 1964. The Department of Park and Planning has applied the principles of the Plan to guide the County’s pattern of development over the years.

Today most large landholdings outside the Agricultural Reserve are developed. The Department believes that our planning focus should change; we need a new planning paradigm that includes:

- shifting the focus from large master and sector plans to small-area plans aimed at directing growth inward and, to some extent, upward.
- identifying and addressing redevelopment opportunities within existing commercial centers to serve surrounding communities, enhance housing options for County residents and workers and support the County’s role in the regional economy.
- shaping segments of some major transportation routes into boulevards so that they become community assets.
- reaffirming the commitment to protect the Agricultural Reserve and the natural/cultural heritage of the County.
- creating accessible public gathering places where we can socialize, recreate, shop in open-air markets, learn, or simply take a walk.
- sustaining the quality of life within our neighborhoods, including those not planned for additional growth or significant redevelopment.

Together with community stakeholders, government agencies and public leaders, the Department of Park and Planning wants to begin to refine our planning focus with the goal of building

communities through vibrant, mixed-use centers; attractive, shared-use boulevards; and great public spaces.

At the same time, the Department will continue to address affordable and workforce housing opportunities, while preserving the integrity of the Agricultural Reserve, and ensuring livable environments worthy of a world-class metropolitan area.

The Department proposes to refocus its planning agenda in response to the changing pattern of development and needs of our residents. A planning agenda developed with active community participation with focus on creating vibrant community-scaled centers, grand boulevards, and quality open space can guide our vision for creating a livable, beautiful, affordable, and prosperous community for all our citizens. (Attachment #1. Work Program and Community Outreach Schedule)

The major demographic, economic and livability issues that compel a new planning focus also oblige the County to reinvigorate how we regulate the pace of growth and assure residents and workers that roads, schools and other public facilities will be adequate at both the local level and on a countywide basis. A planning framework that puts less emphasis on large-area master plans means that other tools, such as the growth policy, will need to be strengthened to stage planned development.

The Department's new strategy will capture the County's future development potential through a more focused pattern of sustainable growth that conserves land and energy. This effort will help reduce pressure to expand the development envelope into the Agricultural Reserve by focusing on community-scaled redevelopment and reinvestment within the existing communities to protect quality of life.

Throughout the country, other inner ring counties and communities are also rediscovering the economic benefits of nurturing their own unique "sense of place". Inner-ring suburbs are transitioning from a traditional suburban development model servicing a central core to a more distributed urbanized model characterized by multiple local commercial centers connected by boulevards and neighborhoods with multiple public gathering places.

In the process, major arterials designed to transport traffic into the commercial areas and support big box malls are being transformed into grand boulevards with mixed-use centers served by transit or express bus. The pedestrian access has become essential in promoting social, recreational, and economic activities.

Plazas, squares, and civic centers are increasingly important as public gathering areas. Neighborhood centers and main streets are replacing strip developments as primary retail centers.

Our residents are demonstrating a greater interest in living in unique places with unique characteristics. We know that people are attracted to, and have affection for, communities that provide a sense of comfort, safety and sociability.

II. Background

In 1964, Montgomery County adopted one of the most progressive Countywide general plans of its day that continues to be a source of inspiration for localities throughout the country. That plan, “...*On Wedges and Corridors*” embraced the principle that growth should be contained within areas well served by public facilities, that persons of every background and income should have a place in the County to live and work, that every generation must act as the steward of the County’s natural resources for the next generation, and that the County’s farming heritage should be preserved with economically viable agriculture.

Thanks to strong political leadership, backed by active citizen oversight, the General Plan, “...*On Wedges and Corridors*” has remained the guiding principle for new development:

- Growth has been largely contained along the main arterial routes into the urban core and the I-270 Corridor, while “wedge” areas between these radiating routes have been developed as neighborhoods or protected open space, including the County’s 33,000 acre park system.
- Adoption of the Agricultural Reserve in 1980, which limited development to one unit per 25 acres over more than one-third of the land area of the County, has focused development via transferable development rights, along existing down-County infrastructure.
- The County was a pioneer in promoting Smart Growth objectives and continues its commitment to Smart Growth principles that focus on an appropriate mix of density, design, and diversity of uses to create sustainable and sociable communities.
- Montgomery County’s economy is one of the healthiest in the country and is the economic engine of the State of Maryland.
- Our investment underground in Metro is paying off above ground by attracting the smartest of Smart Growth elements: housing, jobs, services, and public spaces in a well-designed urban setting.
- Tens of thousands of affordable housing units have been created. These are dispersed throughout the County and provide an array of housing choices. Nevertheless, the number of jobs is growing faster than available housing and the need for more, and more affordable housing remains a significant planning challenge.
- A diverse population from around the world is coming to Montgomery County to work, raise families, and create communities.

These successes have not diminished the challenges to the vision of the General Plan “... *On Wedges and Corridors*;” they have intensified them. Today, residents and employers are still moving to Montgomery County, attracted to the services and quality of life here. As a result, undeveloped land is growing scarcer. With the County’s strong commitment to preserving the

integrity of the Agricultural Reserve, expanding the development envelope into the agricultural and rural open spaces is not an option.

Instead, the Department will look for exciting, new opportunities within already-developed areas. The reshaping of our growth model from new development to redevelopment is the core idea behind this *Centers, Boulevards and Public Spaces* planning initiative.

III. ... *On Wedges and Corridors: Our Firm Foundation*

As Montgomery County transitions into this new growth paradigm, we will not forget the collected wisdom of past planning efforts. This is not about rejecting a well established planning framework, it is about refining it. As Montgomery County matures, the planning focus will continue to evolve. In particular:

- **Remaining committed to the principles of the General Plan.** These principles provide the framework to channel new development to growth areas; safeguard the quality of life in established neighborhoods; preserve the Agricultural Reserve; and plan, acquire, and develop public spaces to provide passive and active recreation opportunities.
- **Securing adequate and affordable housing for our citizens as directed by our *moderately- priced dwelling unit* legislation is still a priority.** Indeed, our new focus on redevelopment around transit centers can make housing more affordable to moderate-income families by reducing their travel costs. With transportation costs now averaging more than 20% of total household income, increasing the availability of transportation options is critical. But because homebuyers value quality transportation options, home prices in areas well served by transit are often high. Montgomery County will continue to explore ways to make centers more affordable to transit-dependent families.
- **Reducing protection of the Agricultural Reserve is not an option.** Montgomery County will continue to protect the Agricultural Reserve through zoning, regulation, continuation of the still innovative *transfer of development rights* (TDR) process, and protection of open space. The Reserve provides many public benefits such as: (1) control of public costs and prevention of urban sprawl, (2) preservation of regional food supplies, (3) energy conservation through promotion of efficient food systems and smarter growth patterns, (4) protection of the environment and water quality, (5) maintenance of rural open space, and (6) preservation of rural lifestyles and cultural heritage. Thanks to the existence of the Reserve, the County is well positioned to take advantage of the fast-growing interest in public fresh farm markets as community gathering places. This creates a “virtuous circle” where public markets supplied by local farms serve vibrant centers, thus reducing development pressure on the Reserve itself.
- **Assurance of adequate public infrastructure will continue.** The County’s Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, which requires that new development be served by adequate transportation, schools, and other services, has been a principal implementation strategy for the County’s Smart Growth policy. While the County’s overall pace of growth will

continue to slow, pressures on the adequacy of public services in many areas of the County will remain high. Because adequacy of public facilities is a key component of quality of life, this planning focus for the new centers, boulevards, and public spaces must continually look for opportunities to strengthen this principle:

- by realistically assessing the affect of redevelopment on public facilities,
- by assuring that the pace of redevelopment is matched by the provision of all necessary supporting facilities,
- by strategically enhancing public facilities in redeveloped centers with additional public amenities such as pocket parks, plazas, streetscape improvements etc.
- by exploring public/private partnerships that can combine public services such as public reading rooms, metro stops, post offices, etc. with private conveniences such as day-care centers, coffee shops, small kiosks, and laundry services.

- **The County will continue to transition from a focus on bedroom communities to a focus on a more compactly developed urban future.** Forecasts indicate that much of future residential development will be infill such as townhouses, condominiums and apartments; offices, stores, and other commercial activities will be clustered around existing and proposed transit service. This responds to a growing demand among our citizens for accessible, affordable, efficient, and attractive places to live, shop and socialize. As an increasingly complex urban landscape puts additional demands on our time we need places that serve our many needs without excessive travel. In addition, at least 143 acres or 24% of the County's commercial centers are ripe for redevelopment, a natural process that occurs when land has become more valuable than the development that sits on it. The centers are where the action is, and mixed- use (commercial and residential) development is the most efficient form of redevelopment. This trend will continue.

In summary, Montgomery County will continue its transition to a more urbanized but also a more human-scale development model where our citizens can easily accomplish daily tasks; where random encounters with friends and neighbors brighten our spirits; where our more urbanized landscape is connected by greenways, pathways and public gathering places, and where we feel safe, comfortable, stimulated, and, yes, attracted to our community and each other.

IV. Pathways to Placemaking: Centers, Boulevards, and Public Spaces

Commercial centers, major travel routes, and open spaces have historically characterized the County's pattern of development. All planning relates to their form and function.

Early travel and development, moving northward from Washington, D.C., were shaped by Montgomery County's topography, stream valleys, and rail lines. Travel, trade, and development followed wide north-south paths along Colesville Road, Georgia Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, Rockville Pike, Frederick Road, and River Road; and east-west paths along Norbeck Road,

Western Avenue, East-West Highway, Randolph Road, Montrose Road, and University Boulevard.

These travel routes created a web of intersecting crossroads that spawned vibrant centers of activity. These early commercial centers provided services to the evolving rural, then suburban communities.

A center was defined most often by a post office, church, schoolhouse, mill, tavern, or a general store. Then the center evolved to include a grocery store, drug store, gasoline station, sometimes a neighborhood theater, and residential development along many road frontages near trolleys and railroads. As time passed and lifestyles continued to change, a broader spectrum of services was provided by centers. Centers evolved to include restaurants, dry cleaners, childcare, and entertainment.

By the late 1960's, a pattern of concentrated centers, linked by transportation routes, and separated by open spaces, was firmly established and articulated in the General Plan. They were, and remain, the places that create and sustain a sense of community for County residents and workers. Exploiting their potential to build communities of choice is the focus of this new planning initiative. The Department proposes to do this by engaging the people of Montgomery County in a community-based planning process called Placemaking.

Placemaking can be defined as the engagement and empowerment of a community to identify the broadest possible set of solutions in developing their shared physical spaces as community assets. Placemaking encourages all participants to focus on *common community aspirations* as opposed to narrow stakeholder interests. It urges us to use the intuitive knowledge gained from living in and experiencing our County, in cooperation with the professional disciplines, to make the important decisions about how our public realm should be designed, built and managed.

In short, Placemaking challenges us all to roll up our sleeves and actively create our common future, rather than simply comment on alternatives futures developed by consultants or even the agencies themselves. Here is how the we plan to use our common community assets to make Montgomery County a truly great place to live, work, love, and learn.

A. Centers as Destinations

Montgomery County's future is, literally, at its crossroads. Many of the County's existing commercial centers, often at the intersection of major transportation routes, are now ripe for redevelopment. Unless we take proactive measures, these centers could be redeveloped much more intensively. The most efficient way to maintain our quality of life is to redevelop these centers, directing growth inward and, to some extent, upward. Strong centers are also essential to the continuing vitality of the County and the livability of our neighborhoods.

Most commercial centers go through development cycles of growth and decline. To remain a viable and vibrant part of any community, commercial centers must renew themselves over time. Centers built around small stores and gas stations, for example, are inefficient for the large, mixed-use development needed to support transit. Center uses that supported suburban

development in the late 1940's and 1950's cannot create the *hip and urban* atmosphere needed to attract younger families.

A wide range of activities, safety, utility, sociability, access--these are all values that characterize great centers as great places. While these values don't change as centers grow and mature, the way centers accommodate these values does. This requires good planning.

Reinvestment and redevelopment should be encouraged as a way to reverse obsolescence and deterioration of many existing centers. If nurtured by the right infrastructure, quality design, a favorable regulatory structure, and great public space management, many centers can support mixed-use, neighborhood commercial and residential re-growth.

Center redevelopment must do more than add or accommodate density. Some centers are small, others large; some centers are focused primarily around commercial space; others are composed of a mix of retail and residences. In all cases, however, our centers should be places that residents and workers from around the region can identify with and be proud of. These centers should be accessible not just by car, but also by transit, foot and bicycle. They should provide services and facilities that residents and workers want and need, such as, libraries, post offices, government offices and local retail. These centers, finally, should include vibrant public spaces--parks, plazas, with wide, inviting sidewalks -- that a range of people can enjoy.

Focusing on our centers will help to further the four core values laid out by the General Plan 40 years ago:

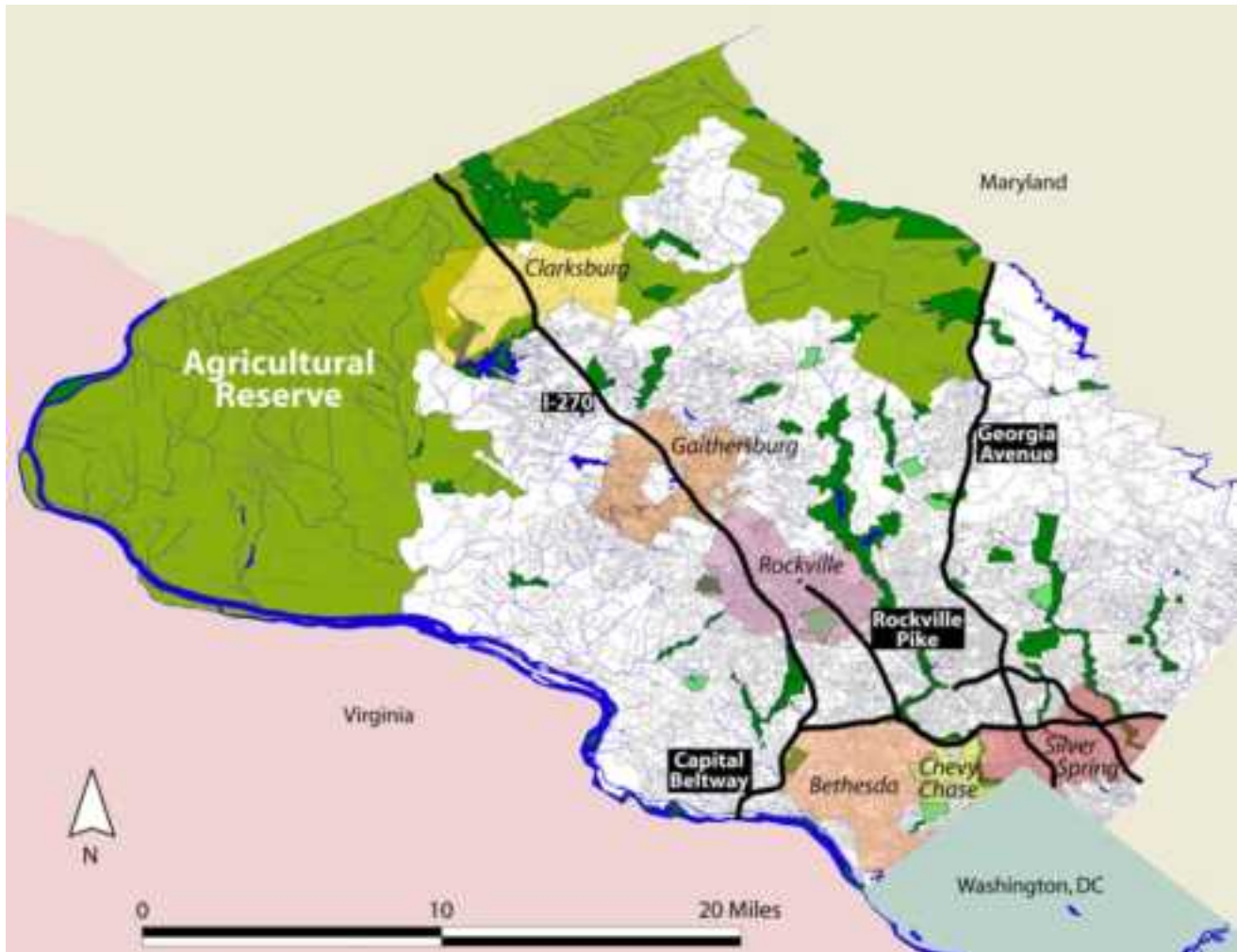
- maximize the value of our public investments
- provide an efficient transportation system, including rapid transit
- preserve our natural and cultural resources
- cultivate livable communities and affection for places

Effective center management maximizes the value of our past and future public investments in expensive infrastructure such as, schools, firehouses, and transit. By attracting people to them, centers make everyday destinations closer, increasing accessibility, while steering development away from our natural and cultural resources. Finally, successful, "human-scale" centers enhance livability and quality of life for people of all income ranges.

Montgomery County's communities are already naturally organized into centers, strung along major transportation corridors like pearls on a necklace. They need to be constantly managed and periodically reinvented to support the growth of a lively mix of uses for communities nearby and farther away. It is in these centers where:

- Infill development can be built on empty lots between existing buildings.

- Obsolete or abandoned land uses can be redeveloped into more up-to-date residential, commercial, or mixed-use buildings.
- A mix of land uses can support each other and create a lively neighborhood at all hours of the day, achieving a healthy job/housing/amenities balance.
- Multi-family housing, including affordable housing, can be developed to foster 24-hour vitality, support amenities, share parking with commercial activity, and take advantage of transportation access.
- Renewed attention to the delivery of high-quality design can preserve and enhance the distinct character of the neighborhood, reinforce residents' sense of place, improve livability, and enhance compatibility with surrounding communities.
- Streets, avenues, and boulevards can be shared to accommodate drivers as well as transit-users, pedestrians and bicyclists, encouraging a balance of modes within and between centers.
- Local stakeholders can feel invested and build a sense of community and shared ownership of their neighborhood.



At least a quarter of the County's existing commercial centers are ripe for redevelopment, and owners of parcels within commercial centers are already coming forward with redevelopment plans. The key will be to make sure that zoning regulations and other incentives encourage the land uses, quality design and effective public space management that will make centers thrive. A critical issue in the County, right now, is the fact that current zoning and parking space requirements encourage redevelopment that does not require public amenities and that is mostly commercial and car-dependent in nature, while mixed-use development that benefits centers is not encouraged.

The re-design and re-engineering of commercial centers to become great destinations will not be easy. People are attracted to new places, new destinations, and new things to do. This does not allow for manual-driven designs, minimum FAR ratios, and other formulaic solutions to creating great centers. The experts on what "makes a good place" are the people who live in that place. They know the activities and uses they enjoy as well as the "look and feel" that define their favorite commercial town centers and main streets. A place-based, community-driven planning process is a critical element of any successful commercial center redevelopment initiative.

B. Creating Boulevards that Link us Together

People will walk and bike more often if provided pleasant and safe places to do so in proximity to attractive and interesting destinations. Yet in many places, driving is the only option for even the most routine daily activities.

Wide car lanes and narrow sidewalks, lots of driveways but few crosswalks, blank building façades, poor transit service, and a disconnected street network are all factors that, together, make walking and bicycling inconvenient or even dangerous. Montgomery County's transportation network largely fits that description: arterials such as Rockville Pike, Georgia Avenue, and University Boulevard are designed solely for cars. This problem is magnified by disconnected local street networks that force local traffic to spill out onto these larger arterial roads, further endangering pedestrians and bicyclists using these routes to get around.

As Montgomery County makes the transition from auto-oriented suburbs to pedestrian-oriented, transit-friendly more-urbanized areas, the transportation network will be redesigned to better balance car use with softer modes of travel such as walking, biking, and using transit.

Within centers, this means:

- ***Encouraging mixed-use, mid-density development*** so that everyday destinations within centers are closer together, and so that ridership between centers is high enough to improve transit service between them.
- ***Creating a connected street network*** that is oriented toward the center, encouraging people to walk or bike to their destination, or to transit.
- ***Providing the necessary pedestrian and bicycle amenities***, including lighting and landscaping.
- ***Ensuring that new development is designed at a pedestrian scale***, with interesting façades coming up to the lot line – streetscapes should be attractive and interesting, even at the average walking pace of three miles an hour.
- ***Encouraging transit-oriented development*** around Metro stations.
- ***Implementing traffic calming measures*** to slow down cars and make the streets safer for all users.
- ***Limiting parking*** and encouraging shared parking.
- ***Creating lively, attractive, comfortable places*** that people enjoy visiting and relaxing in at all times of the day.

Between centers, this means:

- **Redesigning car-only arterials into multi-modal boulevards**, with dedicated bus lanes, bicycles lanes, and wider sidewalks.
- **Designing and developing bus stops as places.**
- **Implementing traffic calming measures** to slow down cars at critical points, making the boulevards safer for all users.
- **Connecting the street grid** to encourage local traffic to stay off of regional arterials and by redeveloping arterials with tree-lined frontage roads.
- **Emphasizing the importance of good urban design**, such as connecting buildings to the street, accommodating parking lanes in front and parking spaces in back, improving the aesthetic qualities of boulevards, etc.
- **Coordinating transportation and land use planning** among County agencies, between the County and municipal governments in the county, and with adjacent counties, to ensure proper continuation of engineering, design and management elements between jurisdictions.
- **Gradually consolidating strip developments** into commercial centers through effective access management.

A key distinction between boulevards and traditional arterials is the concept of boulevards as shared public space.

Traffic lanes can become on-street parking and bus pullouts. Clear crosswalks, signalization, medians, and bumpouts² can make it easier for pedestrians to cross the road. Sidewalks can be wide, well lit, stylish, and accommodating with benches, outdoor cafes, and public art. Amenities, such as lighting, seating, wayfinding, and trees can be improved. Parking lots can become public markets on weekends, with produce and dairy sales by farmers from the Agricultural Reserve. Metro stations can be made more accessible to more people through transit-oriented development. Even major arterials like Rockville Pike and Georgia Avenue can be retrofitted to provide for dedicated bus lanes, well-designed bus stops that serve as gathering places, and multi-modal facilities for bus rapid transit or other forms of travel.

“If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.”

-- Fred Kent, PPS

Implicit in this notion of moving from accommodating large arterials monopolized by motor vehicle traffic to shared-use boulevards is the imperative of much closer and more collaborative planning between transportation and land use agencies, including planning, environment, housing, and economic development agencies.

² Bumpouts, also known as “bulbouts,” are extensions of sidewalks at intersections that reduce the crossing length, thus improving pedestrian safety and accommodating seniors and disabled citizens who take longer to negotiate street crossings.

Grand boulevards require close collaboration on both the inside and outside of the right-of-way through *context sensitive solutions (CSS)*,³ integrated transportation and land use planning, joint corridor management, and a focus on roads and streets as shared public space. In general, these planning techniques focus on how to manage these boulevards for a broad array of public uses, rather than focusing solely on use of the right-of-way by motor vehicles.

C. Great Places for the Community

Montgomery County already has great public spaces, like Silver Spring, Bethesda Row, Old Town Gaithersburg, and Glen Echo Park. They make living in more urbanized areas more attractive to everyone, including families. Great public spaces engender a cycle of virtue: A great place is inviting to people, who in turn make it even more appealing for businesses and visitors.

Increasingly, it is affection for place that becomes the deciding factor in where people choose to live, relocate, or open a business. In today's economy, attention to place is a competitive advantage.

The factors that make one center simply a crossroads and another a favored place include:

- Access to the County's *open spaces*, which gives character and contrast to developed areas, creates linkages, protects sensitive environmental and cultural areas, and provides recreation. These important open spaces are the result of strong public support and numerous public and private actions taken over the years. Coordinated efforts by all County agencies, municipalities, and the private sector will be needed to safeguard and enhance Montgomery County open space resources in the future
- High-quality design of more densely developed neighborhoods that preserve and enhance the distinct character of centers, reinforce residents' sense of place, improve livability, and enhance compatibility with surrounding communities.
- An ongoing and iterative management and planning process that involves stakeholders in each community to meaningfully participate in the development of programs, activities, and design recommendations that can enhance the environment, livability and enjoyability of a place.

Open spaces, civic squares, parks and plazas and other public gathering places promote social activities that build community. Montgomery County will continue to supply its citizens with the great public spaces that define great communities.

³ Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) are transportation designs where the context of the place, not the optimum travel speed of vehicles, dictates geometric design and even choice of transportation solution. Flexible designs, lower design speeds, and traffic-calming features (such as speed bumps) characterize CSS strategies, which are often negotiated between transportation professionals and affected communities.

V. The Agricultural Reserve: A unique resource

Although Montgomery County is best known for its attractive, livable towns and cities, its Agricultural Reserve is key to the County's overall quality of life, our local economy, environment and cultural heritage. The Agricultural Reserve serves as a model for farmland preservation that has informed and inspired communities across the country.

"Land is too valuable an asset to be heedlessly wasted by allowing it to be developed aimlessly in a scattered pattern."

– 1964 General Plan

The Reserve provides us with productive rural communities that not only employ more than 10,000 people in agricultural and agriculturally related businesses, but also contribute \$252 million to Montgomery County's annual economy. In addition it provides access to forests, cultural landscapes, fresh farm produce, and dozens of recreational opportunities. Families from across the region visit the Reserve for fresh berries and peaches in summer, hay rides through the pumpkin patch in October, and freshly cut trees at Christmas-time. Within the 93,000 acres of the Agricultural Reserve, visitors can also go horseback riding, cycling, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and hunting; while enjoying spectacular views of Sugarloaf Mountain, the vistas of productive farmland, or the resources of the County's major parks.

Encouraging the production of fresh produce from the Reserve's farmland for sale to residents throughout the region at farm stands, farmers markets, grocery stores and restaurants is becoming increasingly desirable. This stable local food supply helps to expand access to fresh produce for all County residents. The Reserve and its fresh-food markets directly support and build community food systems and food security throughout the County, which is especially important during this time of increasing energy costs.

The Agricultural Reserve also benefits our environment, providing critical habitats for plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, butterflies and other wildlife. Its forests help cleanse the air. Its farmland and open space help reduce the risk of flooding in the area, filter our drinking water supply, and protect the threatened Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Finally, the Agricultural Reserve helps us to preserve Montgomery County's rich cultural legacy. Our agricultural and cultural heritage is reflected in the Reserve's landscape, its traditional homes, barns, schools, and its historic monuments.

Despite the existing level of protection of the Agricultural Reserve, pressure to encroach upon it will continue to grow. New strategies are needed to ensure its continued protection and the economic viability of agricultural business, among them:

- Methods to encourage more small food producing farms that use sustainable production methods. The County should consider how to bring new farmers, enhancing their sales and distribution opportunities;

- Maximizing the potential for economic return for food producing farms in the Reserve by enhancing fresh farm markets in public spaces throughout the region. Local farmers should be able to sell grass/pasture raised dairy and meat products directly to the public. Public health concerns can be addressed without curtailing this important and emerging niche in agricultural production; and
- Maximizing the potential for greater *food security* in the region to better assure food safety and supply, particularly in this environment of increasing energy costs.
- Strengthening our commitment to finding new housing opportunities near transit and job centers; or more community scale development directly adjoining the perimeters of developed areas; taking pressure for residential growth off the Reserve.

The Agricultural Reserve is an integral part of Montgomery County: it reflects where we come from and the values we stand for. We will maintain the commitment of previous generations to protect and strengthen the Agricultural Reserve as it evolves to meet the economic challenges of the 21st Century.

During Fall 2005, the Department will work with Agricultural Reserve stakeholders to explore and address a broad spectrum of issues related to land use and transferable development rights. A report will be prepared for presentation to the Planning Board in November 2005.

VI. Planning for a More Livable County

Planning at the finer grain, the smaller scale, will require the active participation of community stakeholders, government agencies, and public leaders in terms of planning, designing, implementing and managing their common community assets. Community participation will be crucial to the success of this effort. Agencies will be resources to community-driven processes that create the places of affection of the future.

As the Department begins to refocus its planning agenda on redevelopment and reinvestment, the way we do business will change as well- new ways to cooperate across agencies to support a common community vision will need to be developed. Creating great places requires close integration of several agency functions, most specifically planning, environment, transportation, community, and economic development and housing. Importantly, common processes to conduct outreach to our communities, across agency boundaries, will be needed.

This, in turn, will require new “in-reach” techniques where agencies train each other to work together across disciplines. New linkages with State agency processes will be needed, as well as new ways to collaborate with our incorporated areas to achieve common objectives. major sub-areas. (See attached document: Addressing the Jobs/Housing Imbalance)

Change and growth is not only about square feet, it is also about important qualitative details that affect quality of life, such as vibrant public spaces, the provision of desired community amenities, and the availability of transportation options. The “people” aspect of growth and

change is critical to planning in the future to make sure that Montgomery County remains a place where people want to live, work, and play.

The true “experts” in defining and protecting the quality of life in the County are not planners, engineers, or other professionals—they are the people who live in, and love Montgomery County. Cultivating affection for Montgomery County’s public spaces will be most effectively pursued by encouraging local residents, employers, workers, and other stakeholders to participate in the creation, programming, and management of those places.

Each place, whether it is a County park or a Main Street, has a unique blend of attributes and a unique potential for revitalization, transformation, or upgrade. As people’s needs and wants change, the places they frequent change. However, there is a basic set of building blocks for every great place, and they are:

- *uses and activities*: every great place is founded on a rich array of things to do
- *comfort and image*: places should be attractive, and feel safe and inviting
- *access and linkages*: places should be easy to get to by a variety of means, visible, and easy to navigate
- *sociability*: places should be friendly, open environments, where people can meet, mix, and recreate together.

These building blocks of great places are not easily designed into either public or private investments. They emerge organically from an intense, community-based planning process, as well as from the use of public engagement techniques where community members evaluate specific places and how they could be improved. A collaborative process where developers, public agencies and communities negotiate the “terms of engagement” for place development within the context of a small area plan is most likely to achieve both commercial and community success.

Montgomery County’s centers and other places can be developed along these guidelines, with the strongest collection of each community’s assets identified and celebrated to make them as successful as possible. For Montgomery County’s emerging commercial centers to thrive in the context of a rapidly developing metropolitan area, they must be unique places, and that means they must be planned by and for the people who live in them.

VII. Taking the Next Step, an Implementation Strategy

Montgomery County has within its reach the tools and opportunities to support this new planning focus. Chief among these tools is the General Plan itself, which is still our foundation and guide for future growth. The Agricultural Reserve is another tool that has withstood the test of 25 years of managing growth within the County. The County’s Smart Growth Policies, including its

commitment to the preservation of its parks, recreation and natural areas, is a third tool and guide to future growth.

Building on this strong policy foundation, the Department recognizes the vital importance of engaging the community to help develop and implement this new planning approach. The Department will create active opportunity for community dialogue as this new approach evolves and community visions, aspirations, and needs are further clarified.

Planning at the finer grain, the smaller scale, will require the active participation of community stakeholders, government agencies, and public leaders in terms of planning, designing, implementing and managing their common community assets. Community participation will be crucial to the success of this effort. Agencies will be resources to community-driven processes that create the places of affection of the future.

As the Department begins to refocus its planning agenda on redevelopment and reinvestment, the way we do business will change as well- new ways to cooperate across agencies to support a common community vision will need to be developed. Creating great places requires close integration of several agency functions, most specifically planning, environment, transportation, community, and economic development and housing. Importantly, common processes to conduct outreach to our communities, across agency boundaries, will be needed.

This, in turn, will require new “in-reach” techniques where agencies train each other to work together across disciplines. New linkages with State agency processes will be needed, as well as new ways to collaborate with our incorporated areas to achieve common objectives.

Conclusion

This Framework Report reflects the factual and philosophical pursuit of planning in a county nearing residential build-out. This Report provides the planning rationale and government response to the future planning of our centers, boulevards, and public spaces.

The current Master Plan Program will continue on schedule and run coincidentally with and benefit from these efforts. Planning for mature commercial centers and major transportation and transit routes connecting those centers is already underway, such as-Olney Town Center, Long Branch/University Boulevard, MD 355, and Wheaton CBD.

However, the Department believes that the scope and scale of the planning program will substantially change to emphasize small scale planning.

Since a substantial portion of Montgomery County’s future growth will be located within the development envelope in the form of infill and redevelopment, more intensive community participation, smaller-scale planning, and collaborative implementation approaches will be required.

Planning approaches that focus on small-area planning must be designed to better assure that that private and public space functions well and contributes to overall neighborhood livability.

Planning at the finer grain will change the way we do business- a) new ways to cooperate and make decisions across agency lines to support and implement community vision and plan recommendations will be needed, b) unified processes to seamlessly conduct community outreach will be required, c) more effective ways to listen and respond to community needs and preferences must evolve, and d) expedited plan implementation processes must be developed including the use of streamlined master plan amendment processes and floating zones.

A planning framework that puts emphasis on planning at a smaller scale will obligate the County to reinvigorate how we regulate the pace of growth and assure residents and workers that roads, schools and other public facilities will be adequate at the local level.

Additional information on this planning initiative will be posted on:
http://www.mc-mncppc.org/strategic_planning/index.shtm

Addressing the Job/Housing Imbalance

Summary

A balance of jobs and housing is one of the fundamental planning policies guiding Montgomery County. It is an explicit goal of the General Plan. The benefits of correcting job/housing imbalances was demonstrated by the Transportation Policy Report (TPR) analysis and the balanced “Alternative Land Use Scenario” that came out of TPR is now guiding the adoption of new master plans.

This paper reviews how “jobs/housing balance” has been defined and the benefits of a jobs/housing balance. It also reviews the County’s current and forecast jobs/housing ratios, identifies where and how those ratios are not balanced, and discusses what changes will have to be made to balance jobs and housing.

What is the “job/housing balance?”

Jobs and housing units are considered “balanced” when there are roughly as many jobs as workers living in the County. On average, there are about 1.6 workers per household in Montgomery County, and roughly 1 household per housing unit. As a result, a ratio of 1.6 jobs per housing unit is considered “balanced.”

As recently as 1993, the County considered jobs and housing to be balanced when there was a ratio of 1.5 jobs per housing unit. Over the past decade, the County and the region have moved to the current 1.6 jobs-per-housing-unit ratio. This ratio is used by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in its near-term forecasting and by the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University in its 2002 study of housing supply and demand in the Washington region.

The 2003 Census Update Survey confirms that there are roughly 1.6 workers per household in Montgomery County. There are:

- 1.5 *employed* workers per household in Montgomery County. This figure includes part-time as well as fulltime workers.
- 1.6 workers per household, including both *employed* workers and those *unemployed and looking for work*.
- The current 1.6 workers-per-household ratio does not include retirees, homemakers, and persons of working age who are not working and not looking for work. These are all potential sources of some additional workers.
- According to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, between 6 and 12 percent of workers hold multiple jobs.

As the last two bullets suggest, there is some elasticity in the number of workers per household. Some people enter and leave the workforce based on economic conditions, personal situation, and other factors. One of the major trends of the baby boom generation was a rapid

increase in female workforce participation rates. Older residents may decide to retire later than in the past because they enjoy working or to supplement retirement income.

What are the benefits of a jobs/housing balance?

A balance of jobs and housing is intended to meet two main goals: to provide an adequate *number* of employment opportunities for County residents, and to minimize the *distance* a worker has to travel to his or her job.

To help minimize the impact of growth on the transportation network, it is beneficial to have housing and jobs located in proximity to each other. One way to do this is to provide a variety of employment opportunities within the County to County residents.

If an insufficient number of jobs are available in the County, resident workers will have to commute outside the County to work. If more jobs are located in the County than are needed by resident workers, then those jobs will be filled by people who live outside the County. Either of these two conditions can increase traffic. Studies have shown that, over time, a balance of housing and jobs results in fewer trips of shorter duration.

Of course, even if jobs and housing are perfectly balanced, some residents will continue to commute to jobs elsewhere in the region, and some jobs located in the County will be filled by people who live outside the County. In 2000, 59 percent of employed Montgomery County residents worked in Montgomery County, while 64 percent of the people who worked in Montgomery County also live here.

A jobs/housing balance can have other benefits. A mix of uses in an area creates vitality throughout the day and weekend. Having housing nearby provides additional customers for retail businesses that could not survive on patronage by workers.

A balance of jobs and housing can also have fiscal benefits for the County. A mix of land uses diversifies the revenue stream, and different land uses make different demands on public services and infrastructure.

Geography of the jobs/housing balance

Montgomery County can be divided into many different geographical areas. It is not feasible or even desirable to have jobs and housing balanced in every community. One reason for this: jobs tend to occur at higher densities, on average, than housing. The average size of a Montgomery County firm is 14.5 employees while the average household size is 2.7 persons. This means that jobs naturally occur at higher densities than housing and it would be impractical to attempt to spread jobs out into lower-density residential areas. A more successful strategy is to create job centers in relatively close proximity to residential areas, and to mix jobs and higher-density housing in urban areas.

To provide jobs for nearby residential areas, some areas of the County will have to have jobs/housing ratios above 1.6. In Montgomery County, areas in and around the Beltway and along the I-270 Corridor should have jobs/housing ratios above 1.6 to provide jobs for the predominately residential suburban and rural areas in the balance of the County.

What is Montgomery County's current and forecast jobs/housing ratio?

The jobs/housing ratio of a community will change over time. Typically a community begins its rural-to-suburban transformation with the construction of houses. Over time, those houses are joined by retail and other commercial development that provides services to households. Later, a wider variety of jobs comes to the suburbs to take advantage of the resident labor force and suburban other amenities.

Montgomery County's jobs/housing ratio in 2000 was 1.48. The forecast currently under development (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Round 7.0) for 2030 is shows a jobs/housing ratio countywide of 1.62. In Round 7.0, Montgomery County's share of the region's jobs drops from 16.7% in 2005 to 15.8% in 2030. The County's share of the region's households drops from 18.5% in 2005 to 17.4% in 2030.

In 2000, jobs/housing ratios in subareas of the County were the following: Inside the Beltway: 1.92; Eastern County: 0.80; Georgia Avenue: 0.59; I-270 Corridor: 2.04; and Rural (including Olney): 0.61. The Round 7.0 forecast for these areas has jobs/housing ratios of: Inside the Beltway: 1.79; Eastern County: 1.12; Georgia Avenue: 0.58; I-270 Corridor: 2.25; and Rural (including Olney): 0.55.

Alternative Land Use Scenario – Goals for 2050

Through the Transportation Policy Report (TPR II) process, an alternative land use scenario was identified and adopted as a goal to guide future land use planning decisions. Key features of the alternative land use are to: increase jobs and housing inside the Beltway (I-495), increase jobs in the Eastern County and in the Georgia Avenue Corridor, decrease housing in the Rural Area, and decrease jobs and increase housing in the I-270 Corridor.

The potential results of implementing the alternative land use, expanding transit, and encouraging transit-oriented development include the following:

- Increase jobs within a ½ mile of rail stations from 40% in 1998 to 60% in 2050
- Increase housing within ½ mile of transit from 12% in 1998 to 33% in 2050
- Reduce cross-county afternoon work trips by 18%
- Increase transit ridership by as much as 45%

Specific jobs/housing ratio goals for 2050 are the following: Inside the Beltway: 1.92; Eastern County: 1.51; Georgia Avenue: 0.78; I-270 Corridor: 1.82; and Rural (including Olney): 0.61. The goal for the Countywide jobs/housing ratio in 2050 is 1.56.

Planning for a jobs/housing balance

Calculations of the number of future jobs and housing that are represented by a particular master plan tend to look at the theoretical maxim number of jobs and housing units that can be built under the plan: the “development envelope.” In real life, a host of factors can affect how much of the planned development is really built.

At any point in the life of a plan, markets favor lopsided development. That is, what gets built is what's hot. Currently housing is very marketable, and this means that approved commercial development projects are building out more slowly than in the past. Additionally, developers of commercially-zoned land may be satisfied with constructing projects at well-below planned densities, or if the plan allows it, requesting that housing be built instead.

In past years, the reverse was true. Because there was a strong market for new commercial space, developers tried to maximize the amount of development on many parcels. Master plans under consideration during this period saw landowners trying to have residentially-zoned land changed.

This is a challenge for planners because plans are not meant to simply follow the market. On the other hand, plans are meant to be implemented, and there is little point in adopting plans that are not feasible from a market point of view.

A more focused planning process can help assure the market feasibility of planned development. Attention to more geographically-specific centers will permit greater opportunities for discussion and exploration of current market realities, redevelopment goals, and the market feasibility of a variety of land use options.

ATTACHMENT #2

WORK PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH SCHEDULE

September 15

Urban Land Institute: Commercial Center Technical Assistance Report Planning Board Presentation.

Provide the results of ULI Technical Panel Assistance in response to the ongoing Mature Commercial Center Study requested by the County Council and Planning Board.

Expand land-use, economic, market, and demographic understanding of mature commercial center redevelopment.

Examine successful redevelopment models nationwide. Identify planning, economic, regulatory, and infrastructure environments needed to spur community-scaled redevelopment.

Illustrate hypothetical case studies using examples of commercial centers in Montgomery County.

Recognize the relationship between successful redevelopment and the provision of infrastructure, quality site planning and design.

September 26

Centers, Boulevards, and Public Spaces Framework Report Included in the Semi-Annual Report and Posted on the Web in Planning Board Packet.

Reflects factual and philosophical planning rationale for a county nearing residential build-out. Helps clarify thinking about future development and growth in a maturing county.

Recognizes the vital importance and need for participatory community outreach. The public will be involved throughout development of this new approach. As the program evolves during the fall and winter, additional opportunities will emerge.

The Framework Report is a “working paper” that will evolve throughout community outreach, workshop, and planning efforts in the coming months.

Chronicles the changes from greenfield development to more compact infill and redevelopment, while still remaining committed to the protection of the Agricultural Reserve and the tenets of the General Plan.

Provides nationwide perspective: inner ring suburbs are transitioning from a traditional greenfield, suburban development model to a higher density model characterized by multiple community-scaled commercial centers, connected by boulevards and neighborhoods with multiple public spaces and parks. Neighborhood centers and main streets are replacing strip developments as primary retail centers and major transportation routes are turning into boulevards that become neighborhood assets. Community-scaled redevelopment and community place-making are the cornerstone elements of successful transition.

Responds to the Planning Board and County Council's requested study of the market dynamics and growth potential of Montgomery County's mature commercial centers. .

Provides the planning foundation to begin an effort to refocus the Department's planning agenda on the community-scaled planning and redevelopment of centers, boulevards, and public spaces.

The current Master Plan Work Program will continue on-schedule and run coincidentally with and benefit from these efforts. Throughout the fall and winter of 2005, the Department will solicit community guidance regarding the reshaping of planning approaches, community outreach, and plan implementation techniques; findings will be presented to the Planning Board in February 2006.

September 26

Technical Advisory Workshop I

Workshop @ Brookside Gardens, nationally recognized Fred Kent and his PPS team will facilitate discussion.

Introduce the Framework Report to key Department, County, and State decision-makers responsible for plan and project implementation.

Recognize the importance of designing more effective and efficient implementation approaches and need for more collaborative planning and project development to better assure successful redevelopment and delivery of master plan recommendations.

October 19

Staff Workshop

Workshop for Park and Planning Staff @ MRO Auditorium, nationally recognized Project for Public Spaces team will facilitate discussion.

Introduce the Framework Report to Department staff. Explore ideas for greater collaboration internally and externally to deliver master plan vision and recommendations. Explore case study.

October 27

Public Presentation of Centers, Boulevards, and Public Spaces Framework Report Planning Board Presentation: Public Participation and Comment.

Present the Framework Report. Define community outreach strategy and work program.
Solicit public response

Present Preliminary Technical Studies, including:

- **Mature Commercial Center Study and ULI Technical Findings**
Expands understanding of the inventory of existing commercial centers in the County as requested by the County Council and Planning Board. Highlights market economics, niches, and changing community needs.
- **Commercial Center Community Focus Group Report**
Presents results of three focus groups utilizing innovative techniques as possible prototype for future application in detailed project planning for redevelopment sites. Provides fresh perspectives about livability and functionality of commercial centers from County residents who are not usually part of the planning process.
- **Boulevard Inventory**
Identification of existing major transportation routes, transit corridors, and key commercial centers located along those routes. Identification of on-going master plan, sector plan, and facility planning initiatives. Outline Fall and Winter work program.

November 7

Community Leadership Roundtable

Roundtable Discussion @ Brookside Gardens, national experts will help facilitate discussion, including Fred Kent, President PPS.

Convene national experts and County leadership--community stakeholders and public leaders--to explore the planning implications associated with a county nearing residential build-out.

Expand understanding of opportunities associated with the transition from suburban to a more urban style of development by exploring nationwide experiences.

Broaden understanding of opportunities associated with community-scaled redevelopment and community place-making.

Provide hands-on, participatory case study to identify community visions, needs and amenities important to our citizens regarding livable neighborhoods and public spaces.

Explore new options for community participation and input.

Define *livability criteria* to help identify some potential opportunity areas “ripe” for redevelopment and reinvestment.

Feedback into Regional Reality Check

December 15

Roundtable Report

Planning Board Presentation: Public Participation and Comment.

Present key findings of the Roundtable discussion to Planning Board

December

By the end of the year, the Department will develop, with community stakeholders, an action strategy to address, a range of critical land-use and transferable development right issues important to the well-being of the Agricultural Reserve.

January 15, 2006

Community Speak Out

Brookside Gardens, Sunday afternoon: Public Participation. Community Workshop.

Solicit response to the Framework and Roundtable Reports from a countywide audience.

Provide hands-on, participatory case study to identify community visions, needs and amenities important to our citizens regarding livable neighborhoods and public spaces.

Explore new options for community participation and input.

Define *livability criteria* to help identify potential “opportunity areas “ ripe for redevelopment and reinvestment.

February 9

Centers, Boulevards, and Public Spaces Final Report

Planning Board Presentation: Public Participation and Comment. The participatory outreach effort will culminate in a report to the Planning Board. Results from community outreach efforts will be presented. Recommendations for policy, program, and procedural changes will be made.

Report on results and response to Leadership Roundtable, Community Speak-Out, Technical/Staff Workshops.

Identify alternative community outreach techniques to better meet the challenge of place-making posed by community-scale redevelopment and the needs of our citizens.

Outline needed policy, program and process realignment to meet the challenges of redevelopment and place making. Identify changes to the plan making process as needed.

Identify more effective and efficient implementation approaches to foster more collaborative planning and project development to better assure delivery of master plan vision and recommendations.

February 23

**“Opportunity Area” Report and Next Step Recommendations
Planning Board Presentation. Public Participation and Comment.**

Centers and segments of transportation routes deemed appropriate for more detailed planning and implementation will be highlighted. Planning and implementation strategies will be customized to reflect the needs of the surrounding community. Unique market characteristics will be reflected.

February 28

**Technical Workshop II
Workshop @ Brookside Gardens, facilitated by PPS.**

Continue dialogue with staff from Department, County, State, and others responsible for plan, project, and infrastructure delivery. Develop Implementation Action Strategy.

March-December 2006

**Initiate “Our County, Our Future” Discussion Series and Countywide Opinion
Telephone Survey and Community Focus Groups**

The range of economic, demographic, land-use, and technological challenges emerging in the 21st Century requires a broad strategy for preparing our citizens to understand the myriad of issues so that they can make informed decisions and operate comfortably within the County in the years ahead.

To help expand community understanding and provide information to help the elected Legislative and Executive representatives develop their long-term action agendas, the Department proposes to initiate a 10-month, *Our County, Our Future*, community discussion series.

The information gleaned from this effort will be delivered to the Planning Board and County Council in December 2006.

The Discussion series is comprised of three elements: 1) a discussion series, 2) countywide opinion telephone survey, and 3) community focus groups.

- **Discussion Series**-A panel of engaging speakers and national experts will be invited to present diverse opinions and perspectives about a specific topic. The discussion series will explore a range of pivotal issues that will affect the way we live in the future. Opportunity for small group discussion will be provided to explore additional viewpoints and possible solutions. Proceedings will be transcribed.
- **Community Telephone Survey**- To solicit opinion regarding issues such as, land use and lifestyle option and livability preferences, shopping needs and patterns

- **Community Focus Groups-** To solicit opinion regarding issues land use and lifestyle options and livability preferences, shopping needs and patterns.

The telephone survey and focus groups will be designed to qualitatively explore the range of options of designated/or random populations and to gain insight into what underlies these attitudes. It is not in the scope of the study of this kind to quantitatively measure with statistical reliability the attitudes of the populations from which the sample was drawn or to correlate attitudes with demographic or other variables.

SUMMARY OF ENTERPRISE MARKETING ACTIVITIES

GOLF

- Bi-county Players Choice Club Card program introduced; 2,500 cards sold in three months.
- 2006 season campaign to promote Players Choice currently in planning stages to include radio, television, and print media.
- Bi-county golf website in development to provide customers with more detailed information.
- Sixth annual Demo Days event at Little Bennett sponsored by Pros N' Hackers magazine.

TENNIS

- "Tennis in the Parks" initiative co-sponsored by the Commission, the United States Tennis Association (USTA), and the Montgomery County Recreation Department (MCRD) was successfully completed in August. This program reached area youth that would normally not be exposed to the game of tennis as a recreational and fitness activity.
- Working with USTA to create Fall/Winter Tennis in the Parks program; could bring up to \$75,000 in grant dollars for the program.

RENTAL FACILITIES

- In process of developing rental facilities website to provide customers with internet access to site plans, rates and facility details.
- In process of developing campaigns targeting business and social/event clients to include advertising in The Knot, brochures, and postcard mailings.

ICE RINKS

- Developed First Annual Cabin John Ice Exhibition event for this October; will open to sponsorship for next year.

PARK FACILITIES

- Created ad campaign and new brochure for Little Bennett Campground; will track referrals to determine most successful ad source.

- Promoting Wheaton Haunted Train and Carousel through roadside banners, flyers, facility posters and public relations/editorial.
- Secured sponsorship from Papa John's Pizza for Mini-Golf course that covered costs of printing tee sheets.

CUSTOMER RESEARCH

- Developing internet-based survey tool for each facility to capture customer feedback.
- Customers will be referred to survey tool when making purchase at facilities.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Collaborating with MCRD on quarterly Program Guide starting with Fall 2005 issue ensures that M-NCPPC programming and facility information reaches 100K homes in Montgomery County four times each year.
- Developed Explore Montgomery initiative with Heritage Tourism Alliance of Montgomery to promote tourism and use of facilities by Montgomery County residents.

SUMMARY LIST OF MASTER PLAN, SECTIONAL MAP AMENDMENT AND REGULATORY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Master Planning Activities

Master Plans Underway:

- Damascus Master Plan
- Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan
- Germantown Master Plan
- Kensington Sector Plan and University Boulevard Special Study
- Shady Grove Sector Plan
- Twinbrook Sector Plan
- Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan

Sectional Map Amendments Underway or Completed:

- Olney Sectional Map Amendment

Regulatory Planning Activities

Mandatory Referrals Underway or Completed:

- Acquisition of the National Park Seminary from the GSA
- Aylawn Elementary School Lease to the YMCA
- Broad Acres Elementary School Additions and Alterations
- Dameron Drive Sidewalk in Forest Glen
- Down County Consortium Elementary School No. 8 (Arcola)
- Food and Drug Administration Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Eastern Access Road
- Garrett Park Elementary School Addition
- James H. Blake Telecommunications Facility
- Louis P. Rockwell Elementary School Gymnasium
- Mid-county Recreation Center
- Northwood High School Telecommunications Facility
- Parkland Middle School Modernization
- Peary High School Lease to the Hebrew Academy of Greater Washington
- Randolph Road Maintenance Depot
- Rosa Parks Middle School Infants and Toddlers Facility
- Seven Locks Elementary School Replacement
- Sherwood High School Addition
- Silver Spring Transit Center
- Takoma Park Fire Station No. 2
- Thomas W. Pyle Middle School Telecommunications Facility
- Telecommunications Facility I-495/Persimmon Tree Road
- Walter Johnson High School Auditorium and Gymnasium Renovations
- Watkins Mill Elementary School Addition
- Weller Road Elementary School

LIST OF ADOPTED MASTER PLANS AND SECTOR PLANS

Master/Sector Plan	Adoption
Takoma Park Transit Impact Area Sector Plan	1974
Shady Grove Transit Station Area Sector Plan	1977
Town of Kensington & Vicinity Sector Plan	1978
Agricultural and Rural Open Space	1980
Damascus Master Plan	1982
Capitol View Sector Plan	1982
Oakmont Special Study Plan	1982
Westbard Sector Plan	1982
Boyds Master Plan	1985
Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan	1985
Germantown Master Plan	1989
Georgetown Branch	1989
Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan	1989
Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan	1990
Shady Grove Study Area Master Plan	1990
Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan Amendment	1990
North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan	1992
Damascus Bypass Amendment	1993
Aspen Hill Master Plan	1994
Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area	1994
Bethesda CBD Sector Plan	1994
North Bethesda Staging Amendment	1994
Muncaster Mill Road Amendment	1995
Gaithersburg Vicinity - Shady Grove Amendment	1996
Germantown - Clopper Road Amendment	1996
Four Corners Master Plan	1996
Forest Glen Sector Plan	1996
Glenmont Sector Plan	1997
Cloverly Master Plan	1997
Fairland Master Plan	1997
White Oak Master Plan	1997
Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan	1998
Friendship Heights Sector Plan	1998
Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan	2000
North and West Silver Spring Master Plan	2000
East Silver Spring Master Plan	2000
City of Takoma Park Master Plan	2000

Master/Sector Plan

Kemp-Mill Master Plan
Potomac Subregion Master Plan
Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan
Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan
Olney Master Plan

Adoption

2001
2002
2004
2004
2005

SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY	03-04/08-04	09-04/02-05	03-05/08-05
	Pre-Preliminary Plans submitted	20	40
Preliminary Plans submitted	77	41	83
Record Plats submitted	124	52	141
Minor Subdivision Plats submitted	35	40	156
Subdivision Plans presented to the Planning Board (Pre-Preliminary and Preliminary Plans)	48	80	73
Requests to Revise Previous Conditions of Approval on Preliminary Plans presented to the Planning Board	8	8	8
Requests for Extensions of Preliminary Plan Validity Periods	12	6	5
Request for Waivers of Subdivion Regulations for Preliminary Plans	2	1	2
Building Permits submitted	3,197	1,400	1,195
Preliminary Plan public hearing notices/opinions mailed	5,812	6,083	4,962
SITE PLAN ACTIVITY			
Site Plans Submitted	17	18	16
Site Plans presented to the Planning Board	17	16	16
Amendments submitted to the Board	27	18	10
Amendments presented to the Board	3	6	10
Site Plan public hearing notices/opinions mailed	1,829	2,464	2,605
INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY			
Site Plan Inspections	230	177	405
Preliminary Plan Inspections	52	53	46
Forest Conservation Plan Inspections	501	416	520
NRI/FSD Plan Reviews	39	94	16
Special Exception Plan Reviews	8	3	6
Site Plan Violation hearing	1	0	2
Site Plan Complaints and Violations			6
Forest Conservation Complaints & Violations: Previous complaints and violations have been included in either Site Plan Inspections or Forest			
Conservation Inspections. These numbers are now broken out due to the extent that these counts will increase in the future			

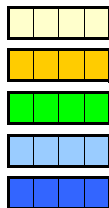
PROJECT PLAN ACTIVITY			
Project Plans submitted	3	2	4
Project Plans presented to the Planning Board	1	0	4
Amendments submitted	0	1	4
Amendments presented	1	2	4
Extensions submitted and approved	0	0	0
Project Plan public hearing opinions mailed	196	140	1
ZONING ACTIVITY			
Zoning Text Amendments/Subdivision Regulations Amendments presented to the Planning Board	12	20	13
Zoning Text Amendments/Subdivision Regulations Amendments adopted by the County Council	6	15	6
Zoning Text Amendments in preparation by staff for master plan implementation	2	3	2
Zoning Map Amendments/Development Plan Amendements presented to the Planning Board	9	7	6
BOARD OF APPEALS ACTIVITY			
Variance Petitions processed from the Board of Appeals	44	35	36
Landscape, Lighting , and Signage Plans reviewed	24	17	21
Total Special Exception applications processed and transmitted to the Board of Appeals	32	23	27
Special Exception application's presented to the Planning Board and transmitted to the Board of Appeals	13	10	12
PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICE ACTIVITY			
Walk-in inquiries at the main Information and Publications Counter	4,290	4,069	3,947
Telephone inquiries answered	3,640	3,536	3,590
Publications, maps, prints, and other items sold or distributed	\$25,351.42	18,890.00	\$21,029
GIS publication sales	\$45,656.00	43,636.00	\$36,891
Property addresses assigned or changed	997	938	1276
Street names assigned or reviewed	112	97	138

Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment Schedule

September 2005

Master Plan Projects	2005												2006												2007												2008												2009											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Upper Rock Creek																																																												
Olney																																																												
Shady Grove																																																												
Woodmont Triangle																																																												
Damascus																																																												
Twinbrook																																																												
Gaithersburg *																																																												
Germantown																																																												
Kensington/Univ. Blvd.																																																												
Westbard																																																												
Wheaton CBD/Georgia Av.																																																												
Langley/Takoma Crossrds.																																																												
Bi-County Transitway																																																												
Phase I: M-83 Facility Plan																																																												

Legend



- Staff
- Planning Board
- County Executive
- County Council
- County Council SMA

F Completion of Final Draft

H Council Hearing

* Coordinate timing with the M-83 Facility Plan

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